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THE CAREER

BY KATHRYN JARBOE

I.

JANET MARCHMONT'S career was never discussed lightly or flippantly. It was a most serious matter, and was always treated seriously. From her earliest years her family and all the friends of her family had recognized that she had a definite career, a great career, before her, and neither she nor it was ever spoken of save with that curiously modulated voice that is employed only when the great personages of the world are mentioned, the voice that is in itself a form of reverence. Had Janet's mother lived, Janet's career might have been made of secondary importance to Janet herself, but, unfortunately, Mrs. Marchmont had heard only the first wailing cry of her child. The father, absorbed in his own grief, refusing to accept the little daughter as even a partial compensation for the loss of a dearly loved wife, resigned the child to the care of his sister, who, on her part, eagerly welcomed the opportunity to mould and guide a young intellect. Love had never forced the portals of Miss Marchmont's heart. Love had no place in her world. In her mind, human beings were merely mechanical organisms with intellects more or less developed.

By the time Janet was six years old, her talent, which was indeed remarkable, was already well developed. She could express all her

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childish ideas in musical melodies, simple as childhood, but holding in their weird harmonies an immense knowledge, if not of the world in which she lived, then of some other wider, broader sphere. Before her small hand could cover an octave, she could play with wonderful fidelity and accuracy any and every musical composition that she heard.

The teachers who were chosen for her marvelled not only at her precocity, but at the skill and knowledge she possessed, a skill and knowledge that would have been wonderful at any age. The most intricate problems of harmony and rhythm seemed to her to be the simplest expressions of fundamental truths.

"There is nothing that we can teach her!" these masters cried. "We should sit at her feet and learn from her."

Through all the adulation and worship, the small girl moved like an automaton. She was a machine perfected far beyond anything that man could make. Her world consisted of the narrow white keys, of the still narrower black keys, of the piano. She had never had a toy of any kind. She had never had, she had never felt the need of, small human companions. The ivory keys had talked to her, and she had talked to them. Her father was a figure much more intangible, much more unreal, than the creations of her own world. When he died, when she was told that she would never see him again, there was no vast emptiness in her heart or soul. The strange minor harmonies that were to her what loneliness is to a more human soul may have come more readily in answer to her fingers' call; but even that was only for a brief season, and then once more the minor and the major were equally expressed.

When Janet was nine years old she might have performed at any concert, not as a child prodigy, but as a marvellous virtuoso. When she was twelve her improvisations might have roused the musical world of her native land to ecstatic appreciation. When she was fourteen she went abroad to study, and the predictions for Janet Marchmont's future, to every one who had not heard her play, seemed couched in terms of the most immoderate exaggeration.

During the next few years Janet's life was a triumphal march from one great master to another. To Miss Marchmont, who had remained in America, the reports were always the same: "There is nothing we can teach her; rather should we sit at her feet and learn from her." In very truth, she did seem to have acquired her musical knowledge in some more harmonious universe than that in which she lived.

Suddenly now, intermingled with all the praise, a faint breath of censure began to flutter. Janet's technique was perfect. Janet's rendering of the conceptions of every master was flawless. Brilliant, clear, fantastic, gay, sombre, simple, subtle, each and every thing resolved

itself under her fingers into limpid, eloquent sound, and yet—and yet—there was something lacking in Janet's playing. It was with bated breath that these cavillers spoke, and yet it was true, the thing they hinted but would not say. There was no soul in anything that Janet played.

One or two adventurous friends spoke to Janet herself on the subject, but she could only return puzzled, questioning glances. To gentle old Fräulein Treffel she added words.

"Not express *myself*?" she cried. "But I *do* express myself—I express all of myself. My music is myself. What more can I give? What more can I say in my music than I do say? I picture myself for you in every way. I tell you all that I think and feel."

"Ah, then think more! Feel more!" cried the old German woman. "Know more and say more!"

Once when Janet had been listening to the greatest of all living masters, one who used his art to express his own consummate egoism, she exclaimed:

"When you play I feel as though there were a dense cloud of fog between you and me. I know that I am not hearing the thing that you are playing, and I cannot understand why it is!"

And he could not tell her that the sleep of her soul was so profound that it could neither speak, itself, nor hear the voice of another soul.

Janet's own improvisations were brilliant renditions of the voices of the world about her—of the birds, of the winds, of the waves, of the storms and calms of nature. Sometimes she could voice the sorrows and the joys of other human beings, but of herself there was nothing; there was no faintest echo of her own personality.

In the works of other masters she could seemingly interpret the exact spirit and idea of the master mind, but it was all done only as a perfect machine would have done it.

Although it seemed quite superfluous, Janet Marchmont was beautiful, in a very human, girlish way. She was tall and graceful, with exquisite coloring and regular features, save for a mouth that was a little larger than it needed to be and eyes that were decidedly darker than the color of her hair demanded. An exceedingly fine stage presence, Miss Marchmont called it. But it must be remembered that Miss Marchmont never considered Janet from any standpoint save that of her career.

II.

WHEN Janet was twenty-two years old it was decided that the time had arrived for her to return to her native land, to give to that land the intense joy of listening to the marvellous productions of her skill and genius, to give it the far more intense joy of placing upon her brow the first laurel wreath of victory.

At first Herr Treffel, who had undertaken the management of her career, thought that it would be wiser for her to give at least one series of concerts in the capitals of Europe, but Miss Marchmont had been firm. Janet's career should begin in the land that had given Janet to the world. That was only right, only fair to that land. And Herr Treffel had been forced to yield the point.

On the eve of her departure for America, Janet wrote the following letter:


MY DEAR AUNT:

You will be sorry to hear that Mrs. Madden is ill, but she has transferred me to the care of her daughter, Mrs. Harold Severance, who will chaperon me on the way home. I wonder what you will think when I tell you that I am going to take a vacation, the first that I have ever had in my life—a vacation from my career, I mean. On the steamer, I am not going to think of my music once. I am going to try to be like other people, to see the world as other people see it. I would like to be like other girls for that short time. I would like to be frivolous and silly, to forget that the world is serious, to forget—don't be shocked—to forget that I have a career. To-night, when dear old Fräulein Treffel kissed me for good-night, she put her little thin hands on my cheeks. I had just played to her for the last time, and she said: "I hope I will live to hear you play again, dear child, and that then your music will tell me that you have learned that a career is——" Just then her brother came bustling in, and, "Hush, hush, hush, Elsa!" he cried. "Don't put silly, sentimental ideas into the child's head. Do you want to ruin her career?" I had to laugh at him. He was so upset, and it was so stupid of him to think that anything could interfere with it.

But I'd like to be silly and I'd like to be sentimental for a short time. Of course, you know, the vacation won't begin immediately. Herr Treffel goes straight over to arrange about the dates, etc., for the concerts, but I am going to stay in Paris for a few days with Mrs. Severance, and I shall meet a lot of Herr Treffel's friends and play for some of them. He has arranged the same sort of thing for London, where I am also going to spend a few days. They're not to be concerts, not even private concerts. He has observed your wishes most carefully, but he says that life is so uncertain and ocean travel so dangerous that he really would hate to have me die before certain of his friends had heard me play.

The vacation will have ended before I see you, my dear aunt, because Herr Treffel will meet me at the steamer and conduct me safely across the city, and, of course, Herr Treffel stands for the career. He will bring it back to me even if I am fortunate enough to forget it for those short days.

My career should all be spelled in capitals, now that it is really beginning, don't you think so? Do you realize how soon the name of Janet Marchmont will be synonymous with fame, *fame*, *fame*? I don't believe that I really can take a vacation even for those steamer days, do you?



Miss Marchmont read this letter with an indulgent laugh. Janet forget her career! Janet take a mental vacation from her career! As well could Janet forget herself. As well could Janet take a vacation from her entire mind.

III.

EVEN Janet herself could not have told whether this idea of a vacation originated in her own brain or had been suggested to her by Marian Severance. For Mrs. Severance's personality had enveloped her completely, had overwhelmed her during their first meeting.

Mrs. Madden, one of Miss Marchmont's old friends, had had no little difficulty in persuading her daughter to undertake the charge of Miss Marchmont's musical prodigy from Dresden to New York, but Janet had accepted the change of chaperons with the same isolated indifference that she bestowed on all the commonplace details of life. She knew Mrs. Madden but slightly; she knew Mrs. Severance not at all. But that fact made no difference to her. It mattered not in the least if a person was young or old. Mrs. Madden was not musical; therefore she was quite outside of Janet's world. Undoubtedly Mrs. Severance was not musical; therefore she would not rise above the horizon that limited Janet's observation.

It was Herr Treffel himself who parted from Janet at the door of the hotel where Mrs. Madden was stopping, where the girl was to meet Mrs. Severance, who had arrived only the day before; and straight from his world of art and music, straight from her own self-absorption, she was flung far out over her horizon to fall softly into a new universe.

In a single night Mrs. Madden's room had been transformed from a dreary hotel apartment into an individual resting place, and yet Mrs. Severance would have said that she had done nothing to it, absolutely nothing. There were flowers everywhere, on the mantel, on the tables, even on the floor; a dozen photographs of pretty girls and well groomed men had been placed, carelessly enough, but each one to its own advantage; the gray daylight had been excluded and the soft, shaded glow of many candles filled the room; from a low bowl spiral curls of incense floated out and up. Over Mrs. Madden's invalid couch was thrown a bit of rose Italian silk, and near Mrs. Madden, quite lost in a deep chair, sat Mrs. Madden's daughter. Blonde and fragile and infinitesimal she was, and yet exquisitely beautiful.

"Of course I may be unjust, Mamsy dear," she was saying, "but it seems to me that Providence has made you ill just to spite me by forcing this frump on me. No, don't contradict me, dearie. I know she's a fright and a freak and a frump and every other awful thing that a genius can be!"

Then the door opened and Janet came in, Janet dazed for an instant

by the metamorphosed room, Janet caught and held by the vision that rose from the deep chair, Janet enslaved fatally by the laughing blue eyes and the gay young voice.

"You poor blessed child!" cried Mrs. Severance, a sudden passion of resentment flashing through her mind. The idea that such an exquisite, beautiful woman, she was mentally exclaiming, should be sacrificed to anything so ridiculous as music! Heaven knew that there were enough ugly women in the world to strum all the pianos that ever were made! She was holding both of Janet's hands. She was looking deep into Janet's eyes. "I knew I'd love you," she cried, "and I do love you—Janet!"

Janet hesitated only long enough to steady herself in the new universe.

"I know that I love *you*," she laughed.

And after that, how could she tell whether she or Marian had suggested the vacation from the career, actually suggested it in words!

In Paris, Mrs. Severance directed Janet's purchases, but held herself aloof from Janet's musical orgies, as she called them. In London, Janet resented ever so slightly the demands made upon her by Herr Treffel's musical friends, but Mrs. Severance did not outwardly or visibly encourage this resentment.

The night before they sailed the two girls were resting in Janet's room when a box of flowers was sent up for Mrs. Severance. Marian, opening the box, glanced at the card it contained with a cry of pleasure and tossed the roses over to Janet.

"John Vandegrift is crossing with us," she explained, "and says he hopes the roses will insure him a welcome on the boat to-morrow."

"But who is John Vandegrift?" demanded Janet. "And why does he send *you* flowers?"

"And might I ask if no one can have flowers sent to them except geniuses?" laughed Marian Severance, recognizing the unspoken question behind the spoken words. "He sends me flowers because he likes me, and because he thinks I'm quite the most beautiful creature in the world, and because I like him, and because he's a friend of Harold's, and because—oh, there are a few hundred reasons I could mention, but possibly he thinks they'll give him the right to monopolize all of my attention from here to New York."

"But who is he?" persisted Janet, separating one of the blossoms from the cluster and fastening it in her hair.

"Who is John Vandegrift?" echoed Mrs. Severance. Her eyes rested on Janet, but in her mind was a different vision. Her thoughts were evidently on the vision, too, for she spoke absently. "John Vandegrift! Surely you remember the photograph in the silver frame?"

"Oh, the man with the square jaw and queer eyes. Were n't they

rather long and straight, like the old Grecian eyes?" Janet was looking at her own reflection in the glass and fastening the rose more securely against the soft coils of her hair.

"Queer eyes! Gracious, no!" exclaimed Mrs. Severance. "For heaven's sake, take that rose out of your hair, Janet! It makes you look so—so professional. John Vandegrift is an awfully clever young lawyer, and belongs to one of the best families in New York. You'll— Just put those roses into some water, Jeanie dear, and wear some of them in the morning—on your gown, mind you, not in your hair. That creamy pink is absolutely the most becoming thing I've ever seen you put on, and—er—a first impression—"

Mrs. Severance's voice trailed off into a silence, but Janet, all unversed in the ways and wiles of a worldly woman, paid no heed to the unfinished sentences of her chaperon, nor did she perceive, ever so faintly, the scheme that had been conceived and born in those few sentences. For Mrs. Severance, as she herself would have said, hated to see a good thing wasted. Janet was distinctly a good thing. A career was an absolute, unendurable waste, unnecessary, impossible. Fate could not have provided her with a better ally than John Vandegrift, nor offered her a more alluring *mise en scène* than the ocean voyage before them.

"Sleep well, dear"—she permitted the faintest ghost of a yawn to interrupt her words—"and don't forget to wear the roses in the morning. No, I don't want any of them," she protested as Janet held the flowers out to her.

"But they are your roses," persisted Janet. "Mr. Vandegrift—"

Mrs. Severance, however, had already closed the door between the rooms. Possibly because his name had been the last words on her lips, possibly because the perfume of his roses filled the air, Janet's thoughts were occupied, quite to the exclusion of all other things, with the unknown Mr. Vandegrift.

IV.

MARIAN SEVERANCE, in the seclusion of her own room, gave herself up to the consideration of the campaign that was before her. She had little trouble in convincing herself that it was not for the sake of Janet Marchmont especially, not at all for the sake of John Vandegrift, but solely for the purpose of rescuing a charming, lovely girl from an odious, hideous fate. It might be—it undoubtedly would be—a most difficult undertaking, but she was determined to succeed, and she spent several sleepless hours in planning the details. But from the very beginning she found the affair absurdly simple and easy.

Her coffee was brought to her room in the early morning, and Janet appeared a moment later, a question on her lips.

"How long has Mr. Vandegrift been over here?" she asked. "Why have n't we—why have n't you seen him before?"

Mrs. Severance's eyelids fell over her limpid eyes. It would never do to let Janet see the almost unholy joy that revelled in them.

"Oh," she answered with all the indifference she could assume, "I dare say he's just found out that I am here. He runs over very often. I'm glad he's crossing with us. It's so much more fun to have some one about who's accustomed to all of it."

"I'm glad, too," Janet answered. "I—I don't believe I've ever even seen any one like Mr. Vandegrift. I'd never seen any one like you, you know, and I simply adored you the moment I laid eyes on you."

Mrs. Severance looked up in sudden alarm. Was it possible that Janet had recognized the plan that had been made for her rescue, that she was flinging this light defiance at her rescuer? But Janet's eyes were calm and serene and her voice even, with no trace of laughter or raillery.

"Sometimes I try to convince myself," she was saying, "that there must be other people in the world like you, but I can't quite succeed. I don't believe there is any one else as dear and sweet and lovable."

"I dare say there are others," laughed Marian Severance, "but I hope you won't find them. By the way, I would n't talk shop to John Vandegrift, if I were you."

"Talk shop?" questioned Janet, bringing her brows together.

"I mean about music. Men don't care for that sort of thing."

"Don't care about talking shop?" Janet echoed Mrs. Severance's words but not her idea.

"Yes"—Marian Severance hurried to regain the ground she might have lost. "You would n't care to hear diatribes about his law, you know."

"Oh, but I would," cried Janet, "because I don't know anything about it. And as for my music——!" She laughed merrily. "You have broken the compact first! You have spoken of it first! I had forgotten it altogether! Are n't these roses delicious? Shall I really wear the whole bunch? Like this?"

She was pinning the flowers on her coat as she spoke, and her lips that were parted slightly to breathe the perfume almost kissed the creamy petals.

"If only John Vandegrift could see her now!" thought Mrs. Severance.

Even the weather proved itself an accomplice, for the day was radiant, soft and clear and warm. Janet, standing a little aloof from

all the hurrying, busy throng on the upper deck, seemed a tangible expression of summer, with her soft hair blowing about her face, her wide, child-like eyes, and the mass of perfumed blossoms on her breast. Mrs. Severance was occupied with deck stewards, deck chairs, shawls and rugs, but never once did she lose sight of her protégée, nor did she lose sight, either, of another figure on the deck.

Rushing forward to pick up a piece of paper that had fluttered, apparently by accident, from her fingers, she brushed against a young man who leaned against the railing.

"I beg your pardon," she faltered contritely, then added in pleased surprise, "Why, John!"

"Marian!" he exclaimed, taking both her hands in his. "I've been hunting for you from one end of the ship to the other. When did you come aboard?"

"Well, more than ten minutes ago," she laughed; "and for the last ten minutes you have n't stirred from the spot and your eyes have n't moved."

The sunburn on John Vandegrift's face grew a shade deeper; but he made no faintest effort to deny her words. "Is n't she beautiful, Marian?" he cried. "She must be going to cross, too, because she's apparently not looking for any one."

"It would seem so," murmured Marian Severance.

But just at that moment the pin that held Janet's roses loosed its hold and the flowers fell to the deck. Gathering them up, she raised the bunch to breathe its perfume, with never a thought that the creamy petals rivalled in texture and in shade the cheeks they brushed against. Over the blossoms she saw Marian Severance and the man with her. She moved slowly toward them, but she did not see the square chin or the queer eyes she had found in John Vandegrift's photograph. She did not see the chin at all, and in the eyes she saw a light all new to her, a light before which her own eyes fell. Again she raised the flowers, as though to shield her face, and now the roses stood out creamy white against the pink that flooded cheeks and throat. On the instant, then, she realized that the flowers she held were his, and not even in the heart of the roses could have been found a trace of the crimson that put the pink tide to shame.

An hour later the ship was under way; England was slipping swiftly, steadily, into a blot on the summer haze, but even more steadily, more swiftly, was the world changing into a misty universe, all unreal, all unlike any imagined thing, warm and soft as the heart of summer, perfumed with the breath of summer's roses, and holding for the man but one woman, holding for the woman but one man. That night Janet watched the sun, all red and gold, sink down into a sea that had painted itself in its Lord's colors, and she made one last, faint

grasp upon Time, upon Reality. Had it been only one day, she asked herself. When that sun had risen, had she been that other creature, that other Janet Marchmont, all ignorant of this wonder that had come to her? Then she turned to face him, and the golden glory of the sunset entered in upon the universe they had created for themselves and held them even more enveloped, even more enshrouded from the outer world. So Time and Reality were lost. There were other sunsets, there were sunrises, there were long, moonlit nights, but all blended into that first golden, glorious light.

To Marian Severance, it seemed that never in all the life she had lived, never in any romance or legend she had read, had there been a love affair so precipitate, so all-absorbing, so wonderful, as this one that she had planned and yet had had no part in. But all prepared as she was to have Janet tell her the night before they reached New York that she was engaged to be married to John Vandegrift, she stood amazed to hear that the wedding was to be at once, within the shortest possible space of time.

V.

UNFORTUNATELY, Herr Treffel did not meet Janet at the pier. Mrs. Severance and John Vandegrift drove with her to the Grand Central Station.

"Now, mind you, if your aunt is very much put out about it," exclaimed Mrs. Severance when she parted from the girl, "tell her to have it out with me and not with you. I'm perfectly able and willing to shoulder my own share of the blame."

"Blame!" echoed Janet. "But how can she blame any one? What harm has been done to any one?"

"Possibly not to any *one*, my dear," laughed Mrs. Severance. "But—well, you know Miss Marchmont is peculiar—from my point of view—and she may fancy—er——" and here Mrs. Severance stopped short.

"But do you really think that I ought to let Janet go home alone?" demanded Vandegrift. "Especially if Miss Marchmont is—is likely to be difficult?"

"There is no question about that, at all," asserted the chaperon positively. "It would never in the world do for you to appear on the scene with Jeanie. Let her see her aunt alone and tell her all about it. You may come up to my house to-night, and Jeanie can 'phone you there when Miss Marchmont would like to see you."

"One would think my aunt was an ogress, to hear you!" Janet objected, laughing.

"Oh, no, not an ogress, certainly not an ogress," returned Mrs. Severance, laughing too. Then she grew suddenly serious. "But you must remember that Miss Marchmont has been a mother to you—

mother and father and everything else. Don't forget that, Janet, whatever happens, whatever she may say."

Janet had time, even in that moment when she was parting from her lover for the first time, to wonder what Mrs. Severance could mean, and what it was that might happen. But on the quick run out to Yonkers she had little thought for anything except John and—well, and just John.

"My dear Janet! My dear, famous Janet!" exclaimed Miss Marchmont. She did take both of the girl's hands in hers, but she did not kiss her, and Janet, for the first time in her life, thought that she would have liked it better if her aunt's arms had been around her neck, if her aunt's lips had touched hers.

"Of course you're tired, I know." Miss Marchmont's voice held an apology for her own eagerness for news of Janet's triumphs. "Did you have a pleasant trip? But, truly, Janet, it seems almost impossible for me to wait to hear what they said to you in Paris and London. Herr Treffel sent me one letter that he had received from M. Chartier. Do you want something, Janet? But that is all that I have heard, every word that I have heard. Will a cup of tea refresh you, or will you need to—do you want to lie down? Janet, Janet, just to think that it has come at last!"

Janet seemed to find some difficulty in meeting her aunt's eyes.

"I—I'm—why, I'm not so very tired. We had such a charming trip!" Here Janet blushed, but Miss Marchmont did not see the significant color, and the girl plunged again into words. Of course the right ones would come soon! "M. Chartier! Why, yes, I remember he was especially kind. But—Herr Treffel did not meet me."

"No, the poor man has sprained his ankle," Miss Marchmont explained. "But you had no difficulty? Mrs. Severance crossed the city with you?"

"Ye-es, Marian Severance and—and Jo——" Janet's pause was almost imperceptible. "Oh, Aunt Sybil, I must tell you at once! I can't keep it to myself another second. I've promised to marry John Vandegrift!"

Mere words, mere sounds, could not have expressed Miss Marchmont's feelings when she heard this announcement. She stared at the girl who sat calmly smiling at her. She rubbed her hand across her eyes and stared again. Then she gasped weakly, wholly inadequately:

"Marry! Marry! But you *can't* marry, Janet. Can't. Can't. It is impossible—wholly impossible. And John Vandegrift of all men!"

Here Janet's smile broke into merry laughter.

"Marry!" she cried. "Oh, yes, I can marry him. Oh, yes, it's

altogether possible. I'm going to marry him before this very month is out." Then the girl's tone grew suddenly serious. "Won't you be glad with me, Aunt Sybil? Mrs. Severance said that she would take all the blame if you wanted to blame any one, and she and John sent their love to you. But I don't see that there can be any blame for any one. John said he hoped you'd like him, and I told him that I knew you would the moment you saw him, but that I fancied you'd have to see him to appreciate him. So, Aunt Sybil, when may he come? I'm—I'm—why, I'm really just dying to see him!"

Janet was apparently—possibly she really was—blind to the incredulity, the amazement, the horror, on Miss Marchmont's face. She was standing in front of the mantel, fingering a small bronze Buddha, paying no attention to the tragedy she was creating. "I've had quite the happiest week that any girl could have. I will look up Mrs. Severance's number. I'm to telephone John there when you will care to see him."

Miss Marchmont had at last recovered her senses, and the storm that broke upon Janet's head found her wholly unprepared. Miss Marchmont upbraided her passionately, she argued with her, she pleaded with her, but all to no purpose. At first Janet met all of her aunt's assertions with laughing rejoinders. Ruined her career? How absurd! And why should John ruin her career? Thrown away the work of a lifetime? How impossible! What effect could her marriage have upon her music? What did this Vandegrift know about her music? What did he think of it? Here Janet laughed more merrily than ever. Why, really, she did not believe that she had ever spoken to John about her music. She had been taking a vacation from her music when she met him, and—and she had quite forgotten it afterwards.

To Miss Marchmont, this seemed the climax of Janet's absurdity, and she entered upon the climax of her wrath. Then Janet grew angry. She would not defend Mrs. Severance. She would not defend John. Neither would she offer any further explanation of her own conduct. After all, she was her own mistress. Mrs. Severance would be glad enough to receive her. John would be only too glad to take her even sooner than she had promised to give herself to him. And within an hour of the time when she arrived at her old home, she left it.

She was received by Mrs. Severance with a rather exultant "I told you so!" And then Janet remembered, for the first time, Mrs. Severance's warning words at the station. But she could not enter into the question then with Mrs. Severance, for at that very moment John Vandegrift arrived, and before the evening was over Janet had promised to marry John within—within ten days? Well, yes, in a week, if he really wanted her as soon as that.

VI.

THE week that followed was a week of hurried preparation, and it was all too short to admit of any definite thought. Janet tried, by telephone and by letters, to reconcile her aunt to the marriage, but Miss Marchmont refused to hold any communication with the girl. Mrs. Severance went out to Janet's old home to see if she could not persuade Miss Marchmont to pretend to be reasonable, even if she were not. Miss Marchmont refused to receive Mrs. Severance. John offered valorously to go out to see Miss Marchmont, but Janet would not permit her lover so to venture his peace of mind. Unknown to all of them, Miss Marchmont made one effort to see John Vandegrift. She determined to see him, to ask him if he realized what he was doing, to demand of him by what right he interposed himself between such a woman as Janet and the career that had been vouchsafed to her. But all of Miss Marchmont's determination was thwarted by a small defective current. Four hours she sat in the gloomy, whitewashed tunnel, but a few blocks from the station at which she had alighted, afraid to walk to the stairs that would lead her out to some other method of conveyance. When traffic was resumed, it was too late to find Vandegrift in his office.

Had Herr Treffel not been confined to a small room in a hospital, he might have seen Janet. He might have seen John Vandegrift also, but it is doubtful if John would have listened to him, although from Herr Treffel John would have learned, at least, that Janet had a career. And of that fact John was still quietly unconscious.

When John planned the route of their honeymoon trip through Canadian lakes and rivers, Janet demurred faintly.

"I hardly feel that it is right for me to take so much time," she said.

"Time, my sweetheart!" John answered gaily. "My time is not so valuable that I cannot give it all to you. It is all for you to take and to use."

Janet yielded with a faint grimace and a merry laugh. It really was a joke that John did not know that she meant her own time, the time that was hers already and not his to give!

After the honeymoon came the installation in the new home—new to Janet, but old to John, for he was the third generation of Vandegrifts to live in the old house on the shaded square. And Janet had only to accommodate herself to the ways of the old servants who had worked for John's father and mother, only to make herself really at home in the midst of the associations in which John had been brought up.

She claimed the back drawing-room for a work-room, and John, laughing lightly at the word, humored all her ideas and suggestions.

for its arrangement. It was then that he spoke for the first time of her music.

"It's curious that I have never heard you play, isn't it? And here we've been married nearly six weeks! Mrs. Severance told me that you had been studying music abroad."

"Well, you know, you'll have lots of opportunities yet," Janet laughed. "Herr Treffel wrote me only this morning asking about days and all that sort of thing. He's coming to see me some day this week."

Janet could not have heard her husband's answer: "Then you want to go on with your lessons?"

She showed him where the piano must stand, what draperies must come down, what lights must be introduced.

Then Janet's own piano was brought down from the old home, and the night after its arrival John asked his wife to play for him.

Janet had opened the piano, but she had not touched its keys. She crossed the room and stood by her husband's chair. He had drawn it close to the window, for the night was sultry, and the soft rose and gold of an early twilight filled the room.

"I want to see if you are fully prepared for what you are about to hear!" Janet scrutinized his face with a great pretense of earnestness.

"Is it so very wonderful?" he asked.

"Is it so very wonderful?" she echoed, and it was mock surprise that filled her voice, for she was only falling in with his jesting humor. "It is the most wonderful! I am the most wonderful! And so, if you'll pardon the slang, I am *it*!" She drew back, laughing, but Vandegrift held her hand for a second before he kissed it and released her.

"You certainly are the most wonderful sweetheart in all the world," he murmured softly.

Then Janet left him.

The lamp-light fell full on the piano's keys, full on Janet's hair and white shoulders. For a few seconds Vandegrift watched her while her fingers wandered over the notes, clinging to them, caressing them, but producing no sound.

"What shall I play?" she asked, looking dreamily over toward John.

"Oh, anything that you care for," he answered easily.

And then from the key-board her old life crept back into her heart and brain. It sang to her. It called to her. She surrendered herself to it, giving herself back to it once again. All the spirits of sound that she evoked claimed her for their own, and she acknowledged each claim. Each harmony that grew under her fingers clamored for her, and she answered, thrilling passionately to the voice she loved. She

did not know how long she sat there, how long she played, but when she stopped she waited a moment for John to speak. He was silent.

"It seems wonderful even to me," she said softly. "Does it make you quite speechless?"

Still John did not answer, and Janet went toward him, holding out her hands for the sympathy that she knew was waiting for her. She stopped suddenly, though. The light from an arc lamp in the street fell full on John's face. She saw that he slept, soundly, quietly. He had slept while she had played! He had slept while she had given him all, all the marvellous perfection of her wonderful power and genius. For an instant she stood there, unable to move or think. She was not angry. She was not even hurt. A curious, impersonal amazement held her immobile. Then she turned away and went up to her own room, and only there did she realize just what had happened, only then did she begin to appreciate in a very faint degree the situation that was before her.

For the first time in her life Janet cried herself to sleep. A career, a career like Janet's, holds no tears. Never before had she needed them. Never before had she found solace in them.

VII.

In the morning the situation seemed less grave. Janet confronted her husband with a playfully imperious demand:

"How long, may I ask, had you been asleep? How much of my music did you hear?"

"Ah, that was why you sulked off to bed, was it?" He held her hands lightly. "Because I slept while your majesty played? How much did I hear? Why, I did n't hear you *play* at all. I heard you practising there for a little while, and then I decided that you'd prefer not to have me hear you until you were in good form. So, you see, it was entirely out of consideration for your feelings that I went to sleep. I dare say one's fingers do get out of touch with the keys. And just think how long you've been idle! As long as you've been my sweetheart!" He was swinging her hands back and forth, but she drew them hastily away.

"Practising! In good form! Out of touch!" she slipped the words in between little ripples of laughter that sounded quite unforced to her husband. "You absurd boy! Do you know that there is no punishment severe enough for the crime you committed last night? I've half a mind never to play for you again."

"I dare say that would be more of a penalty to you than to me," he returned lightly. "I'm afraid I'm not very musical. I never could tell one tune from another, so if you want to be tyrannical you'll have to find some other way."

And even then Janet laughed with him, because, after all, it could not be anything but a jest. There could not possibly be anything in the world so horrible, so grossly horrible, as the reality he suggested.

Later, that same morning, Herr Treffel presented himself to Mrs. Vandegrift for the first time since her marriage, for the first time since she had been in America. She greeted him effusively. He looked at her earnestly. Had *it* gained or lost? That was the question in Herr Treffel's eyes, and, of course, *it* was Janet's career.

"But why do you look at me so curiously?"—she moved restlessly under his gaze. "It really is I, Janet, Janet Marchmont. I am here and all ready for it to begin. I'm so impatient to hear what you have been doing for me, what arrangements you have made, that I'm not even going to ask you what all those friends of yours in London and Paris wrote you about me. Why did n't you send me their letters, though? Are my concerts to begin at once? Is the first of them to be here in New York? There are so many, many things to ask."

But he did not answer her. He still looked at her searchingly, questioningly. After a moment's silence she sprang to her feet.

"Ah, you don't know me!" she cried, laughing. "You're not sure that it is really I myself. I always did maintain that you did n't know me, that you only knew my music, and now I'm sure of it. Listen! Let me prove myself."

She sat down at the piano, and, her eyes still on Herr Treffel's face, began to play, to weave into a seemingly simple, childish melody intricate, weird harmonies.

"That is the first thing you ever heard me play!" she cried. "And what did you exclaim? '*Ach*, wonderful, wonderful, that I should hear such sounds as those in *this* world!' And I knew that you had hoped to hear music like mine only in Heaven. And what do you say now? Or have you nothing to say? Has my playing lost all its charm?"

She left the piano and stood before him, impatiently stamping her foot.

"Lost its charm!" he cried. "Ah, child, child, it is still wonderful, wonderful. I still marvel that such sounds can be produced on this earth, often as I have heard you play. But——"

"But what?" she demanded imperiously.

"Nothing," he sighed. "Nothing at all. Let us discuss these matters about which I came to see you this morning."

"I will discuss nothing," she exclaimed, "until you tell me. Or, rather, you will listen and I will tell you. You would like to say that it has lost nothing, but neither has it gained anything. What is it that you are all waiting to see me gain? That night when you interrupted your sister she was going to say that she hoped I would learn

that a career was not the only thing on earth. She had said once before that she hoped she would live to hear me play when I had learned to feel more. Now, you thought, because I have fallen in love, because I am married, that my music would be different. How can it be different? It is not different. It never will be different. But it is all of me, all that I am, all that I ever will be. I will play for you again. I will play some of the great things that you love."

And for an hour she did play for him, for an hour he sat in an ecstasy of sound. Once more she left the piano. Once more she stood in front of him.

"You see it is all of me!" she cried.

"It is all that any one can ask," he answered simply.

Then together they discussed the details of the concert tour that had been arranged before she left Europe, and Janet was, in reality, as unmindful of John Vandegrift as Herr Treffel was. Only once, in fact, did she remember her husband's existence, and that was when the German musician asked her if she wished her own name or her husband's on the programme.

"Why, you speak as if my husband's name were not my name," she laughed. "His name is my name now. There would be no sense, whatsoever, in my appearing as Janet Marchmont. You can use that as a middle name if you think best, though."

"And—and Mr. Vandegrift will have no objections?" Herr Treffel's question seemed careless enough. "You have consulted him in the matter?"

"Consulted him?" she echoed. "About using the name? Why, no. In fact, I have n't spoken to him about the concerts. You see, I have been so occupied. I've really thought nothing about them until—until last night. And—but, of course, I will talk it over with him to-night—the matter of the name, I mean. Possibly he would think it wiser for me to use the other name—Marchmont. Of course people over here have curious ideas about that sort of thing. Possibly his family—they are very proud of the name, I believe." Janet had been apparently talking to Herr Treffel, but in reality she had been answering thoughts suggested by her own brain—thoughts awakened by that remark of her husband's that might have been a jest and that might not have been.

She dismissed Herr Treffel with a promise to be ready to appear in a week's time and with an assurance that she would let him know in the morning if Mr. Vandegrift objected to her using his name on the programmes. She even laughed lightly as she made the promise. It seemed so silly for her to question John's willingness.

During the entire afternoon that followed she did not leave the piano, but played on, hour after hour, reviving and strengthening her

courage, her hope, and her life, all the time drowning in sound a mocking voice that tried to whisper to her, that tried to warn her of disaster to come.

VIII.

BEFORE John came home she closed the piano, ostentatiously throwing an embroidered scarf across it, and placing upon it a low brass bowl full of roses. But John did not even see that the piano was closed. He was rather tired, he said. He seemed entirely absorbed in the affairs of the day that was ending.

Janet was surprised to find that it required courage to speak to him about the concerts. She was more surprised to find that she had to summon that courage. When she did speak, it was abruptly, almost brusquely.

"Herr Treffel was here this morning, and I have arranged the dates of my concerts with him." Her voice sounded hard and forced, even to her.

"Your concerts?" John Vandegrift's eyebrows and voice expressed his surprise.

"Ye-es," she answered, and here it was necessary to hold the courage with both hands. "Surely you—you know—you know about my concerts, John?"

"Your concerts, my dear!" Again John repeated her words. "I have n't the vaguest idea what you are talking about." His voice sounded needlessly cold and exasperating.

Janet found that she could relax the tension on her courage. She even laughed—a little unsteadily—as she breathlessly told him about her career. The first time that she spoke the word "career" John's face grew harder.

"Your career?" he questioned.

"Why, yes, John," she answered simply, "my career—my musical career, for which I've studied and worked all my life. Surely you have heard of my music, of my musical career?" To Janet the idea seemed so simple that she could not comprehend John's density.

"I believe Mrs. Severance did mention some such foolish notion of your aunt's, in extenuation of that lady's attitude toward me," he said slowly, with a pretense of indifference; "but I'd quite forgotten it. I dare say it made very little impression on me even at the time, as I knew, of course, that it was all a thing of the past."

"A thing of the past!" Janet's voice flashed like a shower of sparks over John's quiet words. "What do you mean? A thing of the past!"

"You cannot fail to realize that there is no necessity for you to do anything of that sort now." Janet's husband looked at her with well feigned surprise.

"Necessity!" she echoed. "Why, John, I don't understand at all what you mean."

"It is very simple." John stopped to knock the ash from the end of his cigar, and Janet felt that the delay was only an additional, intentional aggravation. "Possibly, though, I should have been more explicit about my affairs. Possibly I have taken it too much for granted that you would understand from your surroundings and all that sort of thing that I was—well, rather well off for a lawyer of my age."

"But we are talking at random, John," she answered. "What has all that to do with my career?"

John frowned and his voice grew even colder, his words slower.

"I hate that word, Janet. If you can avoid using it so often, I will be glad."

"What word, John?" There was a passionate impatience in Janet's voice. "Oh, I do not understand you at all to-night."

"The word 'career.'" As he said it, the word did seem to signify something most unpleasant, but his voice made no impression on Janet's mind. She looked at him, intense question in every line of her face.

"You hate the word 'career'?" she asked.

"Yes, when it is used in connection with a woman," he answered.

"But, John, my career is—why, it is my whole life!" she cried.

"Why, my dear child, that is rubbish—pure and simple rubbish."

Vandegrift's voice was patronizing now, and most exasperating. In truth, he spoke as though he were arguing with a tiresome child. He was only beginning to realize that Janet was very much in earnest, that this career of which she spoke was a matter of serious import to her. "I know that you have studied music here and abroad. I dare say you were prepared to earn your living, giving lessons or even giving concerts. But, as I have already explained to you, there is no further necessity for that. If you wish to go on with your music, to take lessons, I've no possible objection. I do not consider that a man has a right to object to his wife's fads and fancies, however much at variance with his own tastes they may be. As I told you this morning, I am not musical. On the contrary, music—playing or singing—is distasteful to me—as distasteful as any other noise. But I would not be selfish enough to ask you to give up a thing that has always given you pleasure, that may still give you pleasure. Surely, Janet, you must see how very reasonable I am."

"But wait a moment, John!" Janet sprang from her chair and stood before him. "It is not a question of reasonable or unreasonable. You do not understand. It is impossible that you can understand. My career—ah, yes, I must use the word, distasteful or no, for it is

the only word that expresses what I mean—my career is my life. I was born for my music. I was brought up on my music. I have lived for it, and for it alone, all my life. It is all of me. It is I, myself. You speak of my earning my living by my music! That has never entered into the matter for one single second. I shall, doubtless, earn money. There is no question about that. But that is merely incidental. I shall give my music to the world because the world needs it, because it was given to me for the world. That is what my career means to me. That is what my career stands for in my mind. What is your own career to you? What do your knowledge and your learning and your skill stand for? Are they merely matters of dollars and cents, or is there something more in it?"

John Vandegrift laughed harshly. "Very little more sometimes," he answered. "But that is beside the point. A man's career is an acknowledged thing. A woman's career is and must be an anomaly."

Janet had heard only the first words. "If that is all," she cried, "then I can say to you to give up your career that you have worked for all your life. I will win for you a thousand, ten thousand, times as much in dollars and cents as your law will bring to you. What would you think—what would you answer—if I were to say to you: Give up your career for me! Give up your profession and content yourself with what I can give you!"

John waited a full moment before he spoke.

"As you said a moment ago, my dear, you—we—are talking quite at random. I believe you began this exceedingly disagreeable conversation by saying that Herr Treffel had suggested some concerts to you. I presume that this Herr Treffel was your music teacher, was he not? Does he happen to know that you are married to me?"

"He knows that I am married," Janet answered hotly, for the quiet scorn in John's voice had maddened her. "I doubt if he knows to whom I am married. I doubt if he cares."

"Does Herr Treffel—do you imagine for a single instant that I will consent that my wife should appear as a public—mountebank?" John hesitated before the last word. Then he brought it out with slow, deliberate intent. He felt that it would show Janet just what he meant, just what he thought about the whole affair.

"But do you imagine for a single instant," she cried in return, "that I will consent to sacrifice my—my—my career"—in her mind there was no stronger word—"for this?" She flung her arms and hands wide apart.

John demanded an explanation of the word and gesture, asking her to define just what she designated by her scornful "this."

Janet was walking up and down the room, and for a moment she did not answer. All at once the scene had grown so preposterous to

her that it did not seem real. At last she stopped close in front of her husband's chair.

"By this," she said, again spreading arms and hands wide apart, "I mean what you offer me here—merely to be your wife, merely to live in your house, to go where you go, to stay where you stay. What else could I mean? What other equivalent do you offer me for my career, for the career that I've lived for all my life, for the career that is my life? I repeat the word so often because I love it. I love the word and I love the thing it stands for. My aunt——" Janet stopped suddenly. The word recalled vividly that last scene with her aunt. She saw the old room distinctly. She even felt in her hands the small bronze Buddha with which she had occupied her eyes during that last interview. Again she heard her aunt's scathing predictions that this man would ruin her career. Again she heard her own frivolous, laughing replies. Now the echoes of that laughter seemed to mock her misery. She beat her hands together childishly, passionately. "Oh, my aunt warned me of this!" she cried. "Why—oh, why did n't I listen to her?"

She was near the piano when she finished, and, sinking onto the bench in front of it, she laid her arms upon the closed keyboard and buried her face against them. The attitude was childish, despairing, and John relented—not toward the career, but toward the woman who was his wife.

"You are so tired, dear," he said soothingly, and his hand touched her hair caressingly. "You are overwrought. I should have been kinder. I should have been more patient. But I am tired to-night, too. We won't discuss this subject any more now, not any more at all, if you will be content to let it rest."

He kissed her hair, he kissed her soft shoulder, but she did not turn her head toward him. She was using every power she could summon to her aid to quiet the sobs and tears that threatened to overwhelm her. As soon as she was sure that she could control her voice, she sprang to her feet.

"I cannot let it rest where it is, even for to-night!" she cried. But she spoke to an empty room. John was no longer there. She hurried toward the door, but stopped short before she reached it. Why should she follow him? What could she say more than she had said?

For a time she paced restlessly up and down the room.

"In his mind, I am only a child!" she cried. "Only a child, to be petted and cajoled. I am not even that. For he would reason with a child. He would try to teach a child. But I—I am only a wife, only a thing to be caressed, to be kept apart, a thing for love and kisses and nothing else."

Gradually, however, the stillness of the night quieted her. Then

she turned to the only counsellor she had ever known, to the only friend she had ever had, to her one and only love, to her one and only lover, and through all the hours of the night she played, demanding and receiving consolation, asking all, receiving all, surrendering all herself in return.

IX.

THE early morning light was creeping into the room when Janet rose at last from the piano. Too physically exhausted to hold herself erect, she threw herself, fully dressed as she was, down upon her bed. The sleep that came to her was deep and profound—so profound that she did not hear the first noises of the wakening household. Nor did she hear John when he crept softly to her bedside. She did not feel his kisses nor heed the tender, loving words he whispered to her.

And yet her first waking thought was of John; of the conflict upon which she must enter as soon as she could see John, of the conflict in which she must win the victory. She could think it all over quite dispassionately now. All of the anger of the night before had been swept from her heart and brain. She could even think of the matter from John's point of view. But she could discover no reason why he should not be able to understand and accept her career—perhaps not as fully as she had always accepted it, but as a definite factor in their life, as the only real factor in her life.

She removed her dinner gown, brushed her hair, and wrapped a soft blue silk kimono about her shoulders. Then she went slowly through the hall and stopped for a moment at John's door. If ever she had been taught to pray, she would have prayed then that John would understand, that John would accept her as she was, as she must be.

But John's room was empty. She glanced at a clock on his mantle. The morning was almost over. John had been gone for hours. On her way back to her own room she encountered a maid who handed her a telegram. It was from Herr Treffel, saying that he must know immediately her decision concerning the name to be used on the programmes and in the announcements of her concerts.

Without a moment's hesitation, Janet wrote her answer: "Use Marchmont only." She did not notice at all that she signed her telegram "Janet Marchmont."

X.

THE hours of that day were interminable. The minutes seemed to repeat themselves endlessly. Janet wandered from one room to another, at first almost unconsciously, not realizing that she was questioning something, not interpreting the messages they held for her. But all at once she understood, she realized that her quest had a definite object. She saw that the rooms were speaking to her of John Vande-

grift; not only of John, but of John's father and of John's grandfather and of the two women who had been the wives of those men. And, after she understood the matter, Janet knew that she had been looking all day for some sign of the yielding, of the self-effacement, of the self-rendering, that must come to John if life with him was to be possible.

Once Janet stopped quite still and asked herself if she could efface herself, if she could abandon her career for John, and the answer to her question was a mocking laugh from her own lips, a laugh that echoed through the empty rooms. It would have been easier, infinitely easier, for Janet Vandegrift to have contemplated suicide or murder rather than the abandonment of the idea and the ideal that had dominated her entire life.

Everywhere throughout the house, in every room, John and John's ideas were dominant, everywhere the man-force spoke. John argued, John's father upheld his arguments, John's grandfather strengthened them. The women, the mother and grandmother, spoke only in the voice of absolute silence. Nowhere was there any evidence of the lives they had lived. In no way had they asserted themselves. They had left no lasting proof of their lives in that house where they had spent so many years.

All day long, while Janet waited for her husband, she was in reality arguing with him and with that dominant man-force of the three generations of men. Everywhere she heard John's answers, cutting, keen, and direct. Each moment, too, she realized that her own strength was weakening; not the power of her own arguments, but her own strength to wield that power. As the hours wore on, she grew desperately restless, too. The clear, concise statements, the appeals, that had been ready for the morning's talk with John, had all been forgotten and she could only say over and over:

"I will be myself. I *must* be myself. I will carry out my own career. It is all of me. It is I. It is I, myself."

John was late, and the maid who came in to light the lamps brought Mrs. Vandegrift the evening papers. Listlessly Janet picked up the one that had been laid on top, and there, confronting her from the first page, was her own face, her own name, Janet Marchmont. She remembered then that she had sent her photographs from Paris to Herr Treffel to use for press-work as soon as the dates of her concerts were decided upon. Janet saw the glaring head-line, the caricature of herself, with John's eyes. For only an instant she held the paper, and then she hurriedly put it at the bottom of the pile. For another instant she stood by the table. She had put the grewsome thing out of sight; but what would that avail her? John would already have seen the paper in fifty places, in the hands of other men.

"I cannot face him now!" she cried aloud, and her own voice frightened her.

Fortunately, she had not dressed for dinner. It was the work of a moment to put on her hat and coat, to pick up her gloves and purse. Another moment sufficed to summon the maid.

"Tell Mr. Vandegrift that my aunt has sent for me, quite suddenly," Janet did not look at the maid as she spoke, nor see the incredulity that lay under the servile mask, but she added: "Tell Mr. Vandegrift, too, that he can telephone me there, at my aunt's house, if—if he will."

"If he wants to" had been the natural conclusion, but Janet changed the form for the sake of appearances, for the sake of the first gossip among the servants in her husband's house, and then she left that husband's house, knowing quite well that it would be for the last time. She was quite sure that John would understand, quite sure that John would not telephone to her, that he would not want to telephone.

She was right, too. For John, coming home, understood; understood not only that she had left him and his house, but understood, in a measure, what her motives had been, what the forces had been that had driven her. John had known how strong an argument that quiet house would be, and he had counted on it, too, for he had thought that it would be on his side and not against him.

All through that day that had seemed interminable to him as well as to Janet, he had relied on the testimony that the house was offering to Janet concerning the value of the position of the mistress of that house, concerning the honor that belonged to the wife of the owner of that house. When he found that she had gone, he realized just how the arguments had all been changed, how they had told against him instead of for him. When he stood by the table where the pile of evening papers lay he knew that Janet had slipped that glaring type and that pictured face under the others, and he realized perfectly that it was when she had seen them that it had been impossible for her to wait longer to see him.

But it was quite as impossible for John to telephone to Janet as it had been for Janet to wait for John, because John, in his own person, stood for that dominant man-force that demands subjection from its women, that tolerates no insubordination, that gives no quarter.

The servant who entered the room to announce dinner saw Mr. Vandegrift still standing by the table where the papers lay, and he saw also a bunch of violets crisping on the coals in the grate.

XI.

JANET and the evening papers arrived at Miss Marchmont's house in Yonkers at the same moment. Whispering to the maid to say

nothing of her presence there, she placed the copy of her own picture carelessly upon the top of the other journals that were to be carried in to her aunt, then slipped up to her room.

On the way out to Yonkers, Janet's thoughts had dwelt feverishly upon John. Had he come home yet? Had he discovered that she was gone? Would he realize that she had left him, that she had gone away from him? Would he send for her? Would he come to her? Was there any way in which she could reconcile him to the life she must live? Was there any way in which their lives would be brought together again?

Now the wide-windowed, silent little room swept John completely from Janet's thoughts. She threw her things hurriedly on the small white bed. Then she stood in front of the mirror and looked, apparently, at the tall young woman it presented to her, but she saw only a thin, pale child.

"It has come at last, Janet, child," she whispered. "Our dreams are realized at last!"

And, the vision of the small, pale girl still in her eyes, the triumphant smile still on her lips, she descended to her aunt's sitting-room.

Miss Marchmont had not moved since she had seen, staring up at her from the coarse, white paper, the name of Janet Marchmont, since she had seen the portrait of Janet Marchmont, but her old fingers were clinched so tightly that they had torn the edges of the paper.

Then Janet herself appeared, entering the room quite as though it were her custom so to enter it a moment before dinner would be served.

"Well, Aunt Sybil, it has come at last. It has really come!" The girl seemed to have but one triumphant cry, and this she repeated over and over. "I never knew until I saw that paper to-night how I have longed, really longed, for the world's acknowledgment of my work."

It seemed almost as though Janet had no words of greeting for her aunt, as though there had been no parting, no separation, no disagreement. But Miss Marchmont held out both hands to her niece, and then Janet bent her tall head and kissed her aunt's lips—for the first time in all her life.

"I'd so forgotten how you've always mothered me," she said softly, "how you, and you only, have cared for me and brought me to this point where I can command the world's acknowledgment. You—you will forgive me, won't you?"

"But Mr. Vandegrift!" Miss Marchmont had flushed under the caress. She ignored the penitence.

"Ah, please do not speak of him at all," cried Janet impetuously. "Not to-night, any way. I want to enjoy my first triumph with you."

Have you read what Herr Treffel has written there? See, he has printed extracts from his letters from those English and French musicians. And, oh! they say that I am the greatest of them all! Do you realize what that means? Do you realize that words like those coming from such men mean that I shall have the whole world at my feet? The whole world! And it's a week to wait before I can prove it to them! A long, long week!"

"But, Janet——" interposed Miss Marchmont.

"No, no, no! I know what you would ask, but I will not tell you anything to-night!" the girl cried. "Or rather, yes, I will tell you everything to-night, and then you must never speak his name to me again." She was pacing restlessly up and down the room. Now she opened the door into the hall. "Can I hear the telephone here?" she asked. "Will Martha hear it and call me? But of course it will not ring! Some one—I do not know if it is you or I or Marian Severance—but some one has done John Vandegrift a horrible wrong. He married me knowing nothing about my career, knowing nothing about me, accepting me as Philip Marchmont's daughter, as Marian Severance's friend. Those two facts established the idea in his mind that I belonged to his world. He thought that I was a woman who would like to be only a wife, to be petted and caressed, who would accept gratefully the life that was given her by her husband, who would be glad of his position, glad of the position won by his ancestors. He cannot accept me as I am. He will not accept my career. I—I am my career. That is all of it. What more would you have?" Janet was talking feverishly, running her words together excitedly, but this was only because she was in haste to return to the subject of her career, the subject of her appearance before the world that was waiting to crown her with the laurel of victory. Impatiently she waved away her aunt's questions. "Yes, of course, I argued it out with him, but he does not understand even the words I use. And, what is more, I argued it out with his father and his grandfather. I have been arguing it with them all day long, and they, on their painted canvases, are no deafer to my words than he is. I have pictured it all to all of them. I have told them what it is to me. Their answers are all one and the same thing. A woman can have no career. A woman's part in life is to be the plaything of her husband when he wants to play, and to hide out of his sight when he does not want to play. And I have told them all for the last time that I am Janet Marchmont, that I have my own career, that I will have it—will have it in spite of them all. And now you must never speak to me about him again. I will not answer you if you do. My own life begins to-night, definitely, with Herr Treffel's announcements in the papers, and he, John, John Vandegrift, is outside of it, absolutely outside of it. I shall wear this gown when

I appear on Friday evening—on Friday evening, one week from to-night!"

Janet was holding in her hand the photograph, a copy of which had appeared in the evening paper, and the wholly matter-of-fact tone in which she spoke would have convinced an even more astute listener than Miss Marchmont that Janet Vandegrift had indeed thrust her husband out of her life.

XII.

IF John Vandegrift could have seen all the letters that Janet wrote to him during the days that followed he might have understood that her mind was a more complex organism than it seemed even to her. But the letter he did receive conveyed to him no impression of her. There were merely a few facts stated in the barest, most meagre way. There was nothing, either, that he could read between the lines.

Under the circumstances [she wrote] there seems to be no necessity for telling you more than a few details concerning my concert tour. It will begin on Friday night, here in New York. It will cover a period of sixteen or eighteen weeks, and will extend through the principal cities of America. Herr Treffel is my musical director, and Miss Marchmont will live with me and travel with me. They will, together, look out for my career, which, as you know, is my life. For your sake, I wish that you might have known this; that you might have understood it before it was too late.

The last sentence was evidently an afterthought, added when the ink of the rest was quite dry, but even that said nothing to John. He read the note twice, and placed it next to a photograph in a small leather case that he carried in his pocket. He did not answer the note. It seemed to him to require no answer. It even, in a way, denied the possibility of an answer.

XIII.

HERR TREFFEL accepted Miss Marchmont's meagre explanation of the situation with small curiosity. It was Janet's career in which he was interested, not Janet, not Janet's husband.

"Well, I cannot see that she has gained anything by this marriage," he said when Miss Marchmont had finished her story. "Let us thank God that she has lost nothing!"

The German musician had taken an apartment in the Carnegie for his sojourn in America, and this he gladly resigned to Miss Marchmont, assuring her that it would be best for Janet to be near the concert hall, and that the studio he had would be large enough for a few small audiences he had asked to hear Janet play.

For Herr Treffel was an expert musical director. Not only had all his press-work been perfect, but, dreading the coldness of a first

audience toward an unknown pianiste, however widely heralded she was, he had arranged two private hearings, asking thereto the most influential musicians and music lovers in the city. The first of these had been set for Tuesday evening, so on the morning of that day Janet and her aunt came to town and took possession of the studio apartment.

At the door of the elevator Janet met Mrs. Severance, who was descending from her club.

"Janet Marchmont!"

"Oh, Marian!"

These were the greetings. Herr Treffel and Miss Marchmont were completely ignored.

"You must tell me! You must let me help you!" Mrs. Severance was holding both of Janet's hands in hers. "I've tried to see John, I've telephoned him and written him, but he is evidently furious with me, for he says that he cannot talk to me now."

"But there is nothing to tell—nothing much, that is," Janet answered. "And I am afraid that there is no—no help, as you call it, possible."

"You've not left John—not really left him?" the elder woman asked.

"Why, ye-es, I—I have left him." Janet's answer was definite, even though her words were spoken slowly.

"Then you must tell me about it. I must know!" Mrs. Severance, reëntering the elevator, drew Janet after her, again ignoring Miss Marchmont and the musical director. "There is no one in the club now," she said. "We can have an hour to ourselves."

So, in a quiet corner of the club's library, Janet told all that there was to tell. She spoke quite calmly and dispassionately, explaining her own position, narrating John's ideas. Occasionally her eyes were turned toward Mrs. Severance, but for the greater part of the time they rested on the twin white spires that seem to hold an angle of heaven in their embrace.

"And you mean to say that you don't love John, after all?" Mrs. Severance's question was asked a whole minute after Janet's voice had trailed off into silence.

Janet's answer was spoken only after her eyes had held her friend's face in a long contemplation.

"I don't know what you mean, exactly," she said. "I don't believe that I know what love is. I—I thought I loved John Vandegrift, there, on the steamer. I was quite sure that I loved him when he asked me to marry him, but the—the feeling that I have for him is nothing compared with my love for my music. That is, it seems to me that it is not. Sometimes I think—sometimes, I mean, since I left him, I have thought that I would give all the world just to touch his hand,

just to hear his voice; that if I could only feel his arms about me it would be all that I could ask; but, instantly, I realize that that is all childish nonsense; that, in reality, his hands, his voice, his arms, have nothing whatever to do with me; and I know perfectly well that if he were to appear before me, even at those moments when I am longing for him, there would be nothing for me to do but to insist that he should recognize my right to live my own life, before he even spoke to me of love."

It was here that Mrs. Severance interrupted Janet's discourse with some half-spoken words that the girl did not hear distinctly.

"You say that I am not normal?" she questioned. "Possibly I am not. Possibly if I were I could not sit here and tell you how much I love him. Possibly if I were what you call a normal woman I could not absorb myself in my music as I am doing now. I do not know if you can believe me or not, but I assure you that, save for those few moments of longing of which I have spoken, I have not thought of John. From my point of view, John, all my association with John, my marriage to him—it all seems abnormal. I do not see how or why I let him come into my life, how or why I have sacrificed these two months to him."

"But, Janet," Mrs. Severance interrupted once again, "you say that is from your point of view. Is it absolutely impossible for you to understand John's point of view?"

"No, oh, no!" Janet cried impetuously. "I do understand it thoroughly. I do appreciate it, but I cannot accept it. I cannot accept it for myself."

"And you mean to sit there and tell me that after only six weeks of married life, you, a girl of twenty-three, have left your husband forever?" Mrs. Severance looked at Janet with earnest scrutiny, hoping to discover some rift in the armor that seemed to encase her. But Janet's lips did not quiver, her eyes did not falter. She even smiled—a little wistfully, perhaps.

"Is it forever?" she asked. "It seems to me that it would be so easy, so simple, for John to understand, for John to accept me as I am, as I must be."

"Has it never occurred to you for a single instant that you might yield?" Mrs. Severance's tone was growing impatient. "Has it never occurred to you that you might give up this career—as you call it—for John? For the sake of John's love for you? For the sake of your love for John?"

"I yield?" Janet's voice rose sharply. "But you cannot know—you cannot know any more than he can, I suppose—what my career is to me. For twenty-three years I have lived with no thought for anything but my music. It has been my one idea, day and night, and it

seems to me as possible to live without it as it would seem to you to live without—without air. I did not see when I married John—I do not see now—why my love should interfere with my career, why my career should interfere with my love.”

Mrs. Severance turned impatiently away.

“You talk like a baby!” she cried. “You don’t know what love is. You have no faintest conception, even, what love is. What is this career? Is it your own passionate love of the music you create, or is it, rather, a passionate desire for the world’s applause? To me, it seems that it is the latter. God has given you this music, you say, and you have no right to withhold it from the world! God has given you your life, too, and you must live it. God has given you love, a great and perfect love, and it should not be denied. To me, you seem to be throwing away everything that is worth while in life, and all for the sake of a few hand-claps, all for the sake of a few empty bravas. Think, think, child, before it is too late. Give it up now, to-day, before it is too late. I don’t ask you to give your music up—that may be, as you say, very dear to you—but give up this——”

“Ah, don’t, don’t, please don’t,” interrupted Janet. “You don’t understand. You can’t. No one can. No one does. It’s not the applause I want. It’s not the glory—in that sense of the word.”

“In Heaven’s name, what is it, then?” Mrs. Severance’s patience was nearly exhausted.

“Why, if you don’t know already, I cannot make you see,” cried Janet. “What is my career? What is *any* career? What does any career mean?”

Janet was only repeating, absently, Mrs. Severance’s question, and she was startled by the next words that fell from the elder woman’s lips.

“It’s a curse, a curse, and nothing else. If it’s not that, it’s an empty, idle word. Once in a thousand times, only, is it a glory, and even then it is a question whether the gain equals the loss.” For a few moments there was silence; then Mrs. Severance rose to her feet and took both Janet’s hands in hers. “But God grant that it won’t be a curse to you, child!” she said. “To me it seems more like that than anything else, but possibly I am mistaken.”

For an instant Janet’s eyes grew dim.

“It must prove itself to you,” she answered simply, “even as it has already proved itself to me. It must prove itself to you and—and to him.”

XIV.

THAT night Janet played for the small audience selected by Herr Treffel, and as she turned from the piano to face the little gathering she saw on every face the same wonder, the same awed appreciation, the same adulation. As always, these men were ready to proclaim her

great, to proclaim her, perhaps, the greatest, and yet, for the first time in her life, Janet looked from one to another and was not satisfied.

She could not have told, herself, what was wrong, what she missed. There had been a full moment of breathless silence after the last note had died away, and then, without further pause, the silence became a tumult. Every man, in his own way, expressed his commendation of the young musician. There were no listeners, for every one spoke at one and the same time. Janet, alone, was silent, but from the babel of sound she did not even try to distinguish a word. Just as there was nothing to say about her performance that had not been said a hundred times, so there was nothing to hear that she had not heard a hundred times.

She still sat in front of the piano, and her fingers wandered caressingly over the keys. There had been a slight awkwardness in the beginning of the evening, and Janet wondered if she was still resenting that. Herr Treffel had presented her to his guests as Miss Marchmont. From his point of view, she was still Miss Marchmont. In the musical world which she was entering she was known only as Miss Marchmont, and yet to Janet it had seemed as though something were being snatched from her, something very dear and sweet and holy, when, to these strangers, she was denied the name of her husband. And it was of John that Janet was thinking as she sat there alone, seemingly so far from the babel of praise that surged about Herr Treffel.

Her programme had consisted of half a dozen of the masterpieces of the greatest masters in her art, and now she could distinguish here and there, in the tumult of sound, the names of these masters. Herr Treffel's guests were saying, doubtless, that her rendering of each work had been even as the master himself would have rendered it. Janet had heard all that so often!

Her thoughts flew back to John—not to John in the desolate house where she had left him alone, but back to John when she had first met him. She saw him as clearly as she had seen him then, and she saw, too, as she had seen then, a shifting opal sea, a shifting opal sky, and a tiny jewelled boat that bore the old moon to rest beneath the waves. Under her caressing fingers, the rocking, lilting sea began to speak, the soft night breezes whispered and sang; and out of the requiem for the old moon grew a pæan of joy for the new moon that was born and for another birth of something as bright and as new as that jewelled boat and as everlasting as the moon it held.

Janet hardly knew that she was playing. She was quite unconscious of the silence that had fallen. But when she had finished she raised her eyes to the group of men that pressed close about the piano, and for the first time that night she smiled. The thing she had sought

before was not missing now, and although she did not wholly understand, even then, just what it was she wanted, she knew that it was hers. There was no silence this time. A deafening tumult arose almost with the last note, but Herr Treffel was the first to touch her hands, and down Herr Treffel's cheeks the tears were streaming.

"Ah, child, child, it has come to you now!" he cried.

To Janet, quite unconscious of her own gain, his words meant merely that the beginning of her career had come.

On Thursday Janet's rooms were crowded almost to suffocation, for Herr Treffel had been besieged by all who had heard his protégée play on Thursday night, for invitations for themselves and their friends. Janet played only her own compositions. If anything, the applause was greater than it had been before, the awe and wonder and surprise were more intense, but Janet herself was not moved, and her thoughts were only of her music, of her great future, of the triumphs that were awaiting her.

XV.

On Friday night, the night of Janet's first public concert, the hall was full. There was not a single seat to be had for any price, there was not even standing room against the walls, and a thrill of expectation, tempered with scepticism, hovered over the entire audience. The few who had heard Janet play were as the little lump of leaven before it touches the mass. There were many there who remembered the prophecies concerning the child prodigy; there were musicians by the score, there were music-lovers by the hundred, there were musical critics from every journal in the city, all waiting, almost breathlessly, for Janet to make her appearance.

When Herr Treffel led her on the stage, he was conscious that a short wave of disappointment swept toward them from the audience. Janet, her white gown relieved only by the gold girdle about her waist, seemed so slight, so small, so childish. Surely it was impossible that she could fulfill the expectation that had been aroused. And Janet, standing before them, seemed almost unconscious of the faint, courteous applause that greeted her. She seemed almost unconscious of the whole vast waiting audience while she sat for an instant before the piano, her hands resting idly on the keys. Then slowly, slowly, she retreated even farther from that audience into her own world of harmony, and on the edge of it they waited and listened. She was playing a Beethoven symphony that they all knew, and yet each one of her hearers realized that never before had he heard it. Not only the harmonies of the master's art, but the passion of the master's soul, was laid bare before them, so simply, so quietly, that the personality of the interpreter was lost. It seemed as though the master himself spoke. At its close, a breath seemed sacrilege, a voice seemed desecration.

Janet still sat there, her fingers resting on the keys that had whispered the last lingering tone. Then from every corner of the house burst salvos of applause; bravas echoed and reëchoed through the hall, and still Janet lingered in the world she had created.

To some it seemed an affectation, to all a pose, as she sat there, her head slightly raised, her eyes wide open, yet seeing nothing; her hands not yet lifted from the piano's keys. But it was neither pose nor affectation. Janet was, in reality, absorbed in her own world. She was, indeed, a career personified.

Number followed number, each and every one producing the same effect, and at the close of the evening there was but one voice, one opinion. Whether it was genius or talent, the gift of God or the work of man, it was the most marvellous, the most phenomenal, the most perfect thing that had ever been heard. There was no dissenting voice, no possible criticism. But to almost every one in that vast auditorium, Janet herself, standing among her flowers, there on the edge of the stage, came as a distinct shock. They had listened to Beethoven, to Brahms, to Chopin, to Bach. They had heard each and every one of the masters. But the girl, herself? She seemed even now a stranger to them—a stranger, almost, from another world.

And, after all, it was this fact that was voiced among that audience as it moved out from the hall.

"That abstraction of self is even more wonderful than her technique!"

"Is it the climax of art or is it—well, let us say, lack of intelligence?"

"Is it an affectation or is it really absorption in the spirit of art?"

"Is it the quintessence of spirit or is it absolute lack of soul?"

Here and there in the crowd were those who had heard the lilting song of the sea on that first night in Janet's room, and these vouched for the fact that the girl was all soul and all spirit. Herr Treffel, acknowledging the congratulations that were showered upon him, hearing the questions that were asked and suggested, could only answer:

"The girl is very young. Art can teach her nothing more, but life may."

Miss Marchmont crept into Janet's room long after the girl was asleep. She saw that her lashes were still wet with tears, and Miss Marchmont could only sigh. But in her heart that sigh was a curse, for she knew that tears held no place in a career like Janet's.

XVI.

THERE had never been a time in John Vandegrift's life when he had been unconscious of the eye of the world. From his earliest childhood he had felt that the world would be interested in him not only as

a unit, an integral part of its own completeness, but as an individual. The realization that the world was looking at him had transformed the obstreperous years of babyhood into a series of exhibitions of perfection, had diminished all the joys of his boyhood and metamorphosed his crop of wild oats into a verdant meadowful of commercial corn. And yet it would have been most unjust to call John Vandegrift a prig, for he was not that. But he knew just what the world would expect of his father's son, and he was oversensitive to the world's criticism, so he had never given the world an opportunity to criticise.

On that first night after Janet's departure his most poignant suffering seemed to come from the realization of what the world would say and think. This was, of course, partly because the disagreement with Janet had been so short and the blow of her departure so sharp that it had deadened him to its own intensity, and partly because he did not then, at that first moment, accept her action as final. He considered her abrupt departure from his house as the act of a spoilt child, of an unreasoning woman. He knew perfectly that she had had nothing to do with the notices in the paper. He even felt that they had undoubtedly been as great a shock to her as they had been to him.

For a short time he centred his entire attention upon these notices. He asked himself how he could explain them to his world? Would that world realize that this Janet Marchmont was identical with the woman he had married? He read each notice carefully, and found that in no one of them was there any mention of Janet's marriage, any introduction of his name. He had, then, a moment of relief. Possibly no explanation would be necessary. Possibly the world would not confound this newspaper creation with Mrs. John Vandegrift. The world, *his* world, would see Janet in his home, would accept Janet merely as his wife, and—— But would Janet come back? Would Janet live merely as his wife? Those had been her own words! That had been what she had said—that he expected her to live merely as his wife!

Suddenly John Vandegrift was brought face to face with the real situation, and for a time the world and the world's opinions had no place in the anguish that overwhelmed him. He bowed his head before the avalanche of grief that swept down upon him. He shut his eyes upon the light of life. He closed his ears upon its sound. He lay prone under his agony.

And then it was the world and the world's opinion that came to his rescue. *He* might suffer, he *must* suffer, but the world must not see his pain; the world should not gloat over the wreck he had made of his life.

And, in truth, the world, or the small part of the world that concerned itself in John's affairs, could only raise its eyebrows in question. It could learn nothing from John, because John avoided it, and

John's wife had made no place in it. A few venturesome spirits, Marian Severance among them, did telephone to him, did write to him, did even attempt to force the portals of his house, but to one and all he sent the same message, denying one and all.

After he had received Janet's note, when he realized that her action was final, that her stand was determined, John's first act was to dismiss all the old servants in his house and to fill their places with new, unfamiliar faces. He resented the anxious, affectionate inquiry in the old voices. His grief and pain demanded absolute seclusion.

It was due to this fact that Hermann Breck was kept waiting in the hall of the Vandegrift house while his name was conveyed to John, up-stairs in the library, for John's door had never before been closed to Breck. The moments passed, and still Hermann waited, but John was arguing with himself. Hermann Breck had been abroad for years—he might know nothing of the tragedy that had come—he was his best friend—he might not touch the wound that still gaped, open and bleeding—or, if he touched it, his touch might not hurt. So, after a time, John ordered that Hermann should be admitted.

He drew back from the opening door, but only for an instant. Then he advanced to meet his friend, and he saw that Hermann did know. He saw it in Hermann's eyes, he felt it in the strong clasp of Hermann's hand.

But in reality Hermann knew very little. He had not heard of John's marriage while he was away. He had been travelling about, and had received no word from home. Upon his arrival in New York, he had been told of John's marriage merely as a prelude to the story of the separation. But the story was already three weeks old, and the friend who narrated it to Breck knew it imperfectly, knew John not at all, and had forgotten Janet's name; had, indeed, forgotten the cause of the separation.

And even now the knowledge was withheld from Hermann. After that first strong hand-clasp, John turned away. He offered Hermann a pipe, the same old pipe that Hermann had so often smoked before in John's rooms. Did Hermann remember the pipe? It was the same, was n't it? And then John asked Hermann about his trip home. Hermann, ignoring the difficulty with which the word was spoken, answered at quite unnecessary length, in order to give John time. But then John asked about Hermann's work, about his studies in the German universities, about his researches in the scientific lore of the old world; and Hermann answered each and every inquiry elaborately and again with unnecessary detail. Then John began a question that he did not finish, and Hermann sat for a little while, smoking and looking furtively now and then at John, who had apparently forgotten Hermann and was looking intently into the coals in the grate.

At last Hermann spoke.

"Won't you tell me, John? Can't I help you in any way?"

It was only the outside edge of the wound, but John's teeth were set over the agony.

"There's nothing to tell," he answered sombrely. "There is no help."

The second silence was shorter than the first, and Hermann moved nearer to the fire, nearer to John.

"Why won't you tell me, John? It ought not to be hard to tell me."

"Why, I've made a fool of myself, that is all." John even tried to smile, but it was a ghastly failure, and for an instant Hermann did not see John quite clearly. The—the smoke or something had suddenly blurred his eyes.

"John!" Hermann could only speak his friend's name.

"Yes, I've made a fool of myself, Hermann. Most men do it at some time or other in their lives, but—but I seem to have made rather a permanent fool of myself."

"I've heard nothing, John, nothing really," Hermann urged. "Some one told me—only that you had married—that your wife had disappeared."

"Well, and is n't that enough?" John demanded, the bite of his wound making his voice savage. "What more do you want to know than that a man is married and that in less than two months he's left like this?"

"It's not enough for a friend to know, John," Hermann answered quickly. "A friend should know what is wrong, where help lies."

"Well, it's all wrong—wrong in the beginning, wrong in the end—and there's no help anywhere."

For the third time Hermann asked, "But tell me, John—won't you tell me what it was that happened?"

And then John turned on him.

"What do you know?" he cried. "What have they told you? That I, John Vandegrift, married a——"

The words ended in a groan, and Hermann, with slow German patience, waited. At last he said:

"What was wrong, John? What was wrong with the woman you married?"

The words and the tone nerved John to speech. It was the first time that he had spoken of his misery to any one, and the shock of hearing Janet referred to in this way, or hearing wrong implied to Janet, gave voice to his despair. He put the story plainly into words, not sparing his own precipitate folly, and dealing gently with Janet. But Janet's name he withheld. He did not specify the career.

"But to be married merely to a career, Hermann," he exclaimed in conclusion, "to be told that you are only secondary to a career, that you can have what is left—if anything is left! Can you imagine my position now?"

Hermann, John's friend, forgave John's precipitate folly, but withheld all kindness from Janet, Janet whose name he had not heard, and yet relief spoke in his voice.

"But surely, John, if you love her, if she loves you, a thing like that is only a trifle to stand between you—a sacrifice of art or science or skill on her part, a sacrifice of pride on yours. A career means much in words to a woman, but she quickly finds that it offers little in reality. You are conservative, I know. You do not believe that a woman should have a career. I am not conservative. I believe that a woman should have all and everything that she can take—and hold. But I mean woman as woman. I have never yet seen a woman who, given her choice, would let her career outweigh her love. I have seen them try. I have seen them throw pride and self-love into the balance on the career's side, but I have never seen love fail in holding down his own side." Breck was silent for a moment, and then he added: "I said I had never seen such a woman, yet I have seen *one*. But with her, her art outweighs her life itself. She is her career personified. It is her heart, her brain, her soul, her life."

John had crossed the room. Now he answered wearily, ignoring Hermann's words.

"You see there is nothing to do or say. Generalities will not help the case. You asked me to tell you what had happened. Here it is again. I have married a career. I wanted a woman for my wife. I am asked to give my name to a career. Do you realize what that means to me? Do you know how I love and reverence that name? How I have kept it as unsmirched as it was given to me? How I have wanted to hand it down to—to others as great and as honored as it was given to me? And now I must face—what? A desolation like this through all the years of my life, and at the end—no one to take my place, my name. So, you see, there is no help from that point of view. I need not tell you, either, that I would not have married the girl if I had not loved her. There are no words that can even touch that. Go back into your own life, Hermann. Let me go into that with you as far and as much as I can, but do not try to touch mine. Tell me more of yourself, more of what you have done and been, more of what you are going to be and to do."

Hermann Breck, for no other reason than to gain time to think of John and of John's position, fell in with John's mood. For half an hour he talked of himself, and as he drew toward the close of his story he said:

"So, you see, there is nothing of what you call life for me. I have only come over here for a short business trip, to settle up some old affairs. I shall accept the position they have offered me, and if my name is ever of service to any one it will be to my university." There was a short silence. Both men sat smoking and gazing absently into the fire, each absorbed in thought, each seeing a woman's face in the coals. "I have, of course, my violin," Hermann's voice went on. "I remember how you've always hated that, John. But it is a certain relaxation, and it permits me to enter circles where I find great pleasure. I have a few warm friends outside of the university life—I mean, among the musical people in Dresden and Berlin. It was there that I met the woman I spoke of some time ago. Great heavens! She was not a woman. She was a girl, an exquisite bit of youth."

Again a silence fell upon the men, and this time it was John's voice that broke it.

"The woman with the career!" he scoffed.

"Yes, the woman with the career." Hermann's voice lingered caressingly over the words.

And then John scoffed again.

"You would better thank God that you discovered it before it was too late."

"There was no too soon or too late," Hermann answered, absorbed in his own thoughts. "I worshipped her from the first. It would have been sacrilege, though, to speak to her of love. Janet Marchmont——"

Hermann's eyes still rested on the fire, but John's voice drew them to John.

"Janet Marchmont!" Vandegrift cried.

Slowly a look of understanding crept into Hermann's face.

"You did not tell me her name!" His voice was almost a whisper.

"Janet Marchmont is the woman I married." John's words were slow and measured.

"And you asked her, you asked *her*, to give up her career merely——"

"Merely to be my wife, yes."

John's voice was not pleasant to hear, and in another second he had left the room, closing the door softly behind him, leaving Hermann Breck alone in front of the fire.

XVII.

THE next night Hermann did not wait to send his name up to John. Unannounced, he went up-stairs to the library. Through the half-drawn portière he saw John sitting alone in front of the grate, his moody eyes resting on the smouldering coals, and John's desolation spoke more forcibly to Hermann than it had before.

John barely raised his eyes in greeting. He did not offer his hand to Hermann, and he waited until Hermann found his pipe, filled it, and lighted it. Then he took up the conversation where it had ended so abruptly the night before.

"Possibly your comprehension of her career will enable you to understand more definitely just what she offered me," he said, "just what was left for me!"

And Hermann, not resenting John's tone, answered slowly:

"It is all beyond my comprehension, John! But I must help you if I can. I would give my life to help—her!" His voice stopped before the last word. He spoke it so softly that John barely heard it.

And then John did give his hand to Hermann, but over the hand-clasp each man could see that the eyes of the other were dim.

After that John talked openly and freely of Janet, and Hermann listened eagerly to the words that were spoken, waited anxiously for the words that were not spoken. For all that John said was of the days that had been, of the love that had been. There was no suggestion of any future, no mention of anything that might be done, of any change that might come. There was no faintest hint, though, whether or no the love was dead.

It was on that second night that Hermann Breck spoke of Janet's concerts, of the marvellous success she had made. For Hermann Breck had spent the day in gathering information. But John answered with slow hesitation:

"I—I don't believe that I want to hear that, Hermann."

Once Hermann began a sentence inadvertently, "Janet Marchmont——"

"She is my wife," interrupted John.

After that Hermann spoke only of Mrs. Vandegrift, until John, again interrupting and laying his hand on Hermann's, said:

"Won't you call her Janet, Hermann? She—she is my wife!"

That time the German's ready tears blurred the tenderness on John's face, and when Hermann could once more see it clearly John's face was hard.

One of the long silences was broken by Hermann's question:

"Have you ever heard her play, John?"

John answered evasively.

"What use would there be in my hearing her play? You know that I know nothing of music."

"I meant, did she play for you here," Hermann explained, "when she was here?"

There was no audible answer to this question, but Hermann saw a faint quiver of the muscles of John's face. John was remembering that night when Janet had played for him, when she had stood before

him and told him how wonderful she was, and he had only answered what a wonderful sweetheart she was! It seemed to John that he could remember every word and every look that had passed between Janet and himself during those two short months.

"I—I want you to hear her, John," Hermann said, after another silence.

"You want me to hear her!" John echoed in amazement.

"Yes, I want you to go to one of her concerts when she comes back," Hermann persisted. "I want you to force yourself to look at the matter impersonally." He ignored John's harsh laugh that answered these words. "I want you to see and understand what her career stands for to her, to see and understand the position she holds in the world."

But that harsh laugh was the only answer that John vouchsafed then, and it was not until several nights later that he said:

"I did not tell you the other night—I don't know why I tell you now—but I—I went to that first concert. I could not stay away. I knew that I could see her there. And then I—I sat there waiting for her and—and then—then I left. I tried to get out. I could not stand it, but I was caught in the crowd at the door and—oh, my God! Hermann, I did see her, I did see my wife, my own wife, standing there for all those fools to gape at, to stare at—and after that—I don't know what I did. I don't know how I got out, but I found myself sitting here—alone—with this horrible, horrible misery."

XVIII.

EACH step of Janet's progress through the Western cities was carefully followed by Hermann Breck. Each fresh wave of enthusiasm that swept back through the musical world of the country to the music lovers in New York was carefully noted by Breck. Sometimes he spoke of all this to John. But after that first, faint, undecided answer John had shown no sign whether he cared to hear of Janet's triumphs. He never answered in words, and his face was growing harder, more illegible, all the time. At last Hermann announced that during the following week Janet would give a final concert in New York.

"So I have seen in the papers," answered John, and all the bitterness of all the months that had passed were expressed in his voice.

"It is her last concert for the season," Hermann continued, "her last in America, I believe. She was to have played in Philadelphia for the last time—I had intended to go there to hear her; but now I will wait until she comes here."

John made no reply, and Hermann went on after a moment:

"I—I have secured two seats, John. I want you to go with me."

Again John did not answer, and the silence drifted into a dead stillness, an absence of all sound, almost an absence of all life. The old

clock in the corner struck eleven and then twelve. The last vivid coal slipped through the grate onto the ashes.

Suddenly John's voice broke upon the quiet room, so suddenly that it startled Hermann, and yet Hermann realized that it was the quality of John's voice that had startled him, not the suddenness with which it had fallen upon his ears.

"I will not go with you," John said. "I will not go where she is, and after you have heard her and seen her I will not see you. I've realized to-night, while I have been sitting here, my abject weakness in listening to you all these weeks, in speaking to you of her, in keeping alive a thing that is dead. She has passed absolutely out of my life. She has gone completely, and this must be the end. I—I am not unappreciative of what you have wanted to do. But there is no help. There is no outside help that can come to a man and his wife when they have reached a place where they need help. If help is to come at all, it must come from the man or the woman, and in this case there is no help, none whatever. So this must be the end of my weakness. I am a man, and I suppose I can play a man's part in the world. She—she has her career, and that is all she needs."

And yet the following morning Hermann received a telephone message from John, saying that he had changed his mind, that he would go to the concert. And Hermann, realizing only faintly the agony in John's heart, sent a ticket for Janet's concert to Janet's husband.

XIX.

WHEN Janet stood before her audience that night, she looked even younger, even more fragile, than she had at her first concert in New York. She still wore the clinging white gown, with its golden girdle about her waist, but her eyes seemed larger and darker, and her mouth, save when she smiled her acknowledgment of the greeting that was offered to her, drooped like a tired child's.

Her programme was made up of well known concert masterpieces, interspersed with some of her own compositions. Janet's music was by this time played from one edge of the continent to the other, but two of the selections on this programme had never been published; one of them she had never played in public. The first Janet called a "Love Song of the Sea." The second was at the end of the list—"Anonyme."

The applause that followed her playing was even greater than it had been that first night, the bravas louder and longer, and when she had finished the sea's love song the heart of the audience seemed to leap toward the player in one broken sob. But this was only what Janet had grown accustomed to during the last weeks of her tour.

Hermann Breck was in his place some time before John appeared.

He had realized that it would be easier for John to come alone, but now he was wondering if John would come after all. Then, when he did appear, it did not seem strange that he did not speak, but Hermann was frightened when he saw his face. It was so ashen, so gray, and yet so hard. It showed so plainly what the man was enduring, it showed so plainly the hold he had upon himself. When Janet appeared he did not move, no muscle of his face changed, and when Hermann looked from the woman on the stage to the man by his side John's eyes were upon his own hands, that were clinched upon his programme. Stolidly and stonily he sat there, seemingly unconscious when one thing ended, when another began. Only when the lilting, rocking Love Song of the Sea began, the man's hands that were clinched as for a hold on life about the programme parted as with a sudden spasm of pain and the two ends of the paper were in his fingers. When that sobbing breath passed over the house, preceding the storm of applause, Hermann heard a sob that was a groan. When he dared to turn to look at John, John was gone.

Hermann still sat there, his eyes on Janet, but his thoughts had gone with John, and, though he seemed to hear everything that Janet played, in his ears rang the agony of the sob that had been a groan. Once he was conscious of voices behind him. He heard a name, Herr Treffel, and he knew that it was Janet's impresario who sat behind him. After that he listened to the voices in the intervals of the music, he noted Herr Treffel's answers to the questions that were asked by reporters and musical critics.

No, Miss Marchmont had made no further engagements. She was going abroad. Yes, after she had rested. She was very tired. But her music had grown even more wonderful, more marvellous, more magnetic, than ever. Yes, it undoubtedly was that she had learned to give her own wonderful personality to her audience. Anonyme? No, she had never played it before in public. A curious name? No, it was not the real name. The composition had not been named yet. Miss Marchmont had merely consented to have that name on the programme. He did not know quite what she would call it. She sometimes spoke of it as the Creation of a Soul, sometimes as the Birth of a Soul. Yes, it was undoubtedly the greatest thing she had written. It was, even now, more in the nature of an improvisation than a definite composition.

And then, under the fragile fingers, grew the first notes of Anonyme—Anonyme, the Creation of a Soul—Anonyme, the Birth of a Soul—Anonyme, Love's Call to the Soul.

The first notes? They were hardly notes. They were breaths and whispers of notes, not confused, yet suggesting an emptiness, a void of sound, a desolation. Then there came into being the faint touch of an exquisite harmony, a suggestion merely, and all at once it was

lost and again through those whispering breaths the white fingers seemed to plead for that exquisite harmony. Again it came, faint and soft, clear and pure as crystal, and then again it was lost and once more the white fingers groped through that empty desolation of murmured sound, pleading, searching for that lost harmony. Again they found it, and now they held it, faint and sweet, but this time sure and true. Weaving in and out, growing ever stronger and more definite, rising in volume, gaining in power and glory, it surged triumphantly at last into a victorious paean of joy, free and exultant.

Just as the soul is greater and more glorious than earth or man, so did this Creation of a Soul exceed in glory and magnificence every Creation of Earth or Man that had ever been produced in art.

It was a torrent of sound that burst from the audience when Janet had finished, an overwhelming avalanche of human voice and human force. To many in that audience Janet seemed as radiant as the soul she had created when she stood before them, hardly hearing them, absorbed in her own joy; but Breck, standing in the midst of that mass of surging humanity, alone knew that it was the cry of Janet's own soul that he had heard, the birth of her own soul, the exultant victory of her own soul.

XX.

"I KNEW that you would come." John's voice was dead and flat, and Hermann, with Janet's eyes before him, with Janet's glorious song of triumph ringing in his ears, stood and looked at the man who sat crushed and bowed before him. He turned abruptly away. He did not want to see the misery in John's eyes. For an hour he tramped up and down the long library. For an hour John sat in his dumb and speechless despair.

Then, at last, Hermann spoke the words that he had held back for so long.

"If you do not love her, why do you not set her free?"

"Is she not free?" John asked, and then he added: "And I have never said that I did not love her."

But Hermann Breck did not hear his words.

"She is free—free by her own divine gift!" he cried. "But why do you hold her bound to you? Why do you try to trammel a creature like that to your paltry, tyrannical self. She belongs to no one man, but to the whole wide world."

But even as Breck spoke the words, even as he longed to destroy with his own passion and fury the man who sat before him, he heard again that triumphant burst of victory, the victory of the soul. The victory of the soul? Was it that or was it love triumphant and victorious? Again Hermann heard that faint, sweet harmony that had answered the pleading, searching fingers, but now it was rocked and

cradled by the lilting wash of the sea. It was love, then, that had sought the soul! It was the soul triumphant with love! It was love, and love alone, that had created the soul!

And then Hermann heard John's voice, still flat and lifeless and curiously repressed.

"I told you, Hermann, that I would not see you again after you had heard her, after you had seen her, and this must be the end—the end for you and me. You will see her and hear her. You love her. You think you love her. Her—her career will go on, but I will have no third person interfering between my wife and me."

And Hermann, not daring to give that message of triumphant love to Janet's husband, went out from John's house into a desolation as black as John's.

XXI.

It was eleven o'clock of the day after Janet's concert when she answered Miss Marchmont's knock on her door. Twice before, she had heard soft footsteps steal to her room; she had each time heard the soft, gentle rap; she had heard her aunt's voice, saying, "Janet dear, are you awake?" but she had not answered. She was absorbed in a dream of the joy that this day was to bring to her, absorbed in the contemplation of what she would say, what John would say, what John would do. Her eyes were soft, and if they were occasionally drenched with tears it was with tears of joy. Her mouth no longer drooped like a tired child's, but in its corners were dimpled smiles, for it was a child's mouth, after all, and the smiles were very young.

Now, however, she threw one arm across her eyes and answered her aunt's call.

"Yes, dear," she said; "I'm wide awake. Won't you come in?"

Miss Marchmont entered the room, bearing an armful of the morning papers.

"They are full of you, child!" she cried. "But——"

"But!" interrupted Janet. "Do they say anything new about me? Have they discovered that I cannot play, after all?"

"Whatever they say is new to me," Miss Marchmont answered, laying a caressing hand on Janet's hair; for even Miss Marchmont had learned something in these months that she had spent with Janet. "You will want to see them after a while. I was only going to say that Herr Treffel is here. He wants you to play once more before you begin to rest. He wants you to give another concert—on Monday night, if you will. I know how worn out you are, dear, but——"

"I! Worn out? My dear Aunt Sybil!" Janet laughed merrily. "I never was better in all my life, and I'm not too tired to play, but—I don't want another concert. I can't play again. I gave them all, last night."

"But may I not tell Herr Treffel that you will think about it?" urged Miss Marchmont. "He is so very anxious to have you play just once more!"

"Poor Herr Treffel," breathed Janet softly, but Miss Marchmont heard the words.

"No, you must not let him over-persuade you, of course," she answered; "but, Janet——"

"Oh, he cannot over-persuade me, nor can he persuade me." Here Janet laughed again. "You must tell him that I positively cannot, positively will not, play again."

"You mean not now, not immediately, or not at all before you go abroad?" Miss Marchmont's anxiety seemed to equal Herr Treffel's.

"Why, not—not now." Janet was sitting up in bed, pushing her pillows about, and her face was turned away from her aunt. "Tell him that I'll see him myself soon, and then—oh, get rid of him some way, Aunt Sybil, and then be a dear and give me my coffee here. And come and sit with me for a little while, too. I'm so happy, Aunt Sybil! Are n't you happy, too?"

"How could I be anything else, child, when the only wish I have ever had is being so fully gratified?" Miss Marchmont had been helping Janet with the pillows, and now she laid her hands on Janet's cheeks. "My dear, famous little girl!" she said.

Quick tears rushed into Janet's eyes, and she caught both of Miss Marchmont's hands in hers, but she only murmured:

"Oh, Aunt Sybil!"

And, of course, Miss Marchmont could not understand.

While Janet was drinking her coffee, Miss Marchmont turned over the pages of the different papers.

"They are all the same," she said. "They all speak of the new charm in your playing, of the wonderful magnetic power you have over your audience. This one says that that quality was quite lacking when you were here before. Here in this one are some things quoted from Herr Treffel. It seems that Herr Treffel told the writer of the article that Anonyme was in reality the Birth of a Soul."

A slight frown contracted Janet's brows.

"He should not have done that!" she exclaimed. "He should have let me give my own name when I was ready to."

"But you did not call it at any time the Birth of a Soul, did you?" asked Miss Marchmont. "Is it not the Creation of a Soul, instead?"

"Is not a birth a creation?" Janet spoke dreamily. "But I do not mean either a birth or a creation. I do not mean an awakening—I do not know what the right word is. It is a call into the darkness for a soul that has already been born, that has already been created, that is held in sluggish captivity. Oh, I cannot even think of it this morning!

But I know that I will find the word that I want." Janet drew her hand wearily across her eyes.

"Yes, it will come, dear, just as everything comes to you." And then, more to divert the girl's thoughts than because she desired to impart the information, Miss Marchmont added: "Marian Severance was here this morning. She wanted very much to see you, but I told her that you were asleep."

"Marian Severance?" Janet repeated. "I—I don't believe that I want to see Marian just yet. Soon—oh, very soon—I will see her, but—but not just yet. Did she—did she say anything? Anything—in particular, I mean?"

"Nothing special," Miss Marchmont answered, wishing for the first time in her life that she could lie.

"Was Marian at the concert last night?" asked Janet.

"Why, ye-es," faltered Miss Marchmont. "She—she was there."

"Well, what did she say about it?" demanded Janet. "Surely she said something more than that she was there."

"Oh, she said, of course, that every one was there, that it was a brilliant success, and all that," answered Miss Marchmont. "Marian is not musical, you know. She does not understand anything, really. She can only speak of people and outside things."

"Did she say that—that——" Janet's voice persisted, but her words stopped.

And then the truth was forced from Miss Marchmont's unwilling lips.

"Yes, she said that he was there."

"That he was there! Oh, Aunt Sybil, that John was there, that John went to hear me play!" There was a curious note in Janet's voice.

"Don't let it worry you, child." Miss Marchmont was eagerly solicitous. "Oh, Janet, Janet! If only you'd never seen his face! If only you'd never heard his name! I did not mean to tell you that he was there. I did not want you to know."

But Janet was only echoing her aunt's words:

"If I'd never seen his face! If I'd never heard his voice!"

XXII.

THAT afternoon Janet dressed slowly and with unusual care. A dozen times she looked anxiously at herself in the glass. A dozen times she altered a lock of her hair. Even after she had closed her door, before she rang for the elevator, she went back into her room and looked once more at the reflection of her own face. And as she looked the little dimpling smile crept into the corners of her lips and she was satisfied with what she saw.

When she reached Twenty-third Street on her way down-town, she saw that it was only four o'clock—too early, by a full hour, for the errand she had in mind. So she left the car and went into a little tea-room. The place was empty and cool and quiet. Janet sat down near a small table in a bow window, with her back to the room, and looked out into the tiny garden that faced her. She did not see the flowers, though; she did not notice the tea and thin bread and butter that the maid brought her. She was realizing that her joy was very near. Then, suddenly, a tear fell on her hands that were clasped on the table before her. She smiled quickly and said to herself:

"How perfectly absurd it is for me to be nervous now! Now of all times!"

Then she tried to hold the cup that she lifted quite still, but it quivered and trembled, and again she smiled. Suddenly she realized that she was not alone. Two voices were speaking, and, without turning around, she could see that two girls were sitting at a table in the corner of the room. They were chatting about their shopping, about the tea and other insignificant things.

Into Janet's mind flashed the idea that it would be very nice to have a friend, a young woman friend, who would understand quickly like that. She had never had a friend of that sort. The quick light laughter, the ready comprehension, the half-spoken sentences, touched Janet deeply. "They are almost like lovers," she thought. "It—why, it must be very sweet—almost as sweet as—as lovers." Then Janet heard her own name mentioned by one of the girls.

"I heard Janet Marchmont play last night."

"Were you there? Why, so was I."

"She is wonderful, is n't she?"

"Wonderful! Oh, *wonderful* expresses nothing. She is beyond any words. Beyond any comprehension. It did not seem to me that I could endure it to come down to ordinary life after she had stopped playing Anonyme! I could n't sleep, I could n't quiet myself in any way. I—I think I cried all night."

"Oh, Amy, did you feel that way, too? It seemed to me that she held all the love and all the longing and all the beauty of life right there in those white hands of hers. I—I—oh, there will never again be anything like it in my life!"

There was a short silence, and Janet sat smiling. And yet it was not the flattery that so appealed to her! It was the sweet, intimate friendship that enabled them to speak so to each other.

Then the voices spoke again.

"Did you wonder at all what she was like? She, the woman, apart from her music?"

"She? Oh, what could a woman with a gift like that be like?"

What could she herself be like? She lives in that exquisite world of hers all the time. She gives it to us only for an hour. Just think of it, Amy! Just think what it must be to have a career like that! To live a life like that! To look forward into a future like that!"

"Yes, that is how it seemed to me," answered the other girl. "It seemed to leave the world that I have so very empty of everything that is worth while."

"Oh, no, not empty," answered the first voice. "It seemed to show me that there was something in my own life that I ought to have found—that I had missed. It is very curious." The words drifted into a sigh.

"I suppose she has all that we have, too. She must have love and friendship and all those things."

"But do you suppose that there is any place in a life like hers for those things. Would n't you think that a career like that, a great and glorious career, would hold a woman apart from the ordinary interests of ordinary lives?"

"She is so very young, too, is n't she? She seems no older than we are."

"Why, she is no older than we are. You remember her, don't you? She lived in the wide white house near the church."

"Is it that Janet Marchmont?"

"Why, yes. My father knew her father, my mother knew her mother, very well. She died when this Janet was born, you know, and that queer, strict aunt came to take care of the child. You remember them, surely?"

"Yes, of course, I remember that child, but I did not know that this was that Janet. Just to think, Ysabel! We might have known her—might have known that marvellous, marvellous creature whom we heard last night!"

And all this time Janet was clasping and unclasping her hands and saying to herself: "Just to think that those dear, sweet, intimate friends might have been my sweet, intimate friends if it had not been for my career!"

And then Janet suddenly looked at her watch. The hour was almost at an end. She let her veil fall over her face and drew her coat about her shoulders, but as she left the room she glanced at the two young women, who were still talking, quite unmindful of her presence. It seemed to Janet that it would be very sweet to have for her friends the daughters of women who had known her mother, and she wondered if Amy and Ysabel would ever be her friends. She noticed that they wore small bunches of pink arbutus at their belts. At the corner she stopped and bought a small bunch of the fragrant spring flowers and fastened them into the lace of her coat. Janet wanted to do all the

small womanly things that were suggested to her even by strangers. She had had so little time to give to those small things. She knew so little about them. The boy from whom she bought the flowers was slow in making the change, and Janet suddenly grew very nervous. She did not want to be late—later than the time she had set in her own mind.

XXIII.

JANET hurried down the avenue. Her knees were shaking so that she could hardly walk, and her fingers were cold as ice. Once more she laughed at herself. Again she rallied herself for being nervous then. When she reached the square she walked quite past her husband's house, down to the corner, then turned and retraced her way; but her feet refused to go up the steps, and again she passed the familiar door.

At the corner she stopped quite still, and her face was piteously white, but suddenly she remembered something—the something that brought the little dimpling smile into the corners of her lips—and she turned once more and, holding the smile all the time in the corners of her lips, mounted the steps resolutely. She was prepared, even, to meet old Lawson, who had always served John and John's father, but she faltered a little when she saw the new face at the door.

"Ye-es, Mr. Vandegrift is at home, but——" the man hesitated.

Janet entered abruptly and turned toward the drawing-room.

"Tell him that I wish to see him," she said. "It is very important. I think he will see me."

She had given no name, but the man had recognized a certain note of authority in the voice, and he knew enough of his master's story to surmise more.

Janet went into the formal room, that seemed even more desolate than was its wont. It had been closed so long that it seemed to have forgotten that there was such a thing as life. She hurriedly raised the shades. Then she walked toward a chair, but she could not sit down. The door into the back drawing-room—her work-room, as she had called it—was closed, and she moved toward it. It might be easier to talk to John in there! That room was more familiar! But the door was locked and the key was gone, and she realized then that John had locked that part of his house—the part that had been hers—away from his servants. She looked hurriedly toward the mantelpiece, where her photograph had stood, the photograph she had had taken in Paris for Herr Treffel. Had John destroyed that? It was still there, and Janet drew her handkerchief gently across the face, where a few faint particles of dust rested.

"You poor, ignorant little girl," she whispered. Then the lace of her handkerchief caught in the frame, and she raised both hands to free it.

Turning back to the room, she suddenly confronted John, who had entered noiselessly. Her husband's face was white, and even in that second Janet saw how stony it was. But John's voice was firm and steady.

"I—I did not imagine that—that it could be you," he said.

"Oh, John!" Janet's words were gasped breathlessly, and one hand, the hand that held the handkerchief, moved toward him, but John did not see it.

"I—I imagined that you would send to me if you wanted anything," the man said. "I did not think that you would come yourself."

Janet's knees were trembling again, and, almost unconsciously, she sat down. Then she remembered that something, and the little smile crept again into the corners of her lips.

"Won't you sit down, John?" she said. "I—I want so much to talk to you."

"I—I think I will stand," John answered. "You say—you say you want——"

"I—yes, I want so much," Janet answered, but then her heart was wrenched by the sight of John's white face, by the misery that had lined it. "But first, John—John, I want to tell you—I must tell you—how sorry I am, how terribly sorry I am, for the pain you've had."

The words were, of course, desperately inadequate. They were so stupidly childish, and the thing that she had come to tell him was so different from all this, so far removed from all pain and sorrow.

"Aren't you going to speak to me, John?" she cried. "Surely you believe that I am sorry!"

"I—I appreciate your sorrow, of course," he answered; "but I also appreciate the fact that you have not come here to express your sympathy for me."

"No," she exclaimed; "I did not come for that at all. But I do want you to know how—how it breaks my heart—to see how I have made you suffer. I want you to—I—I came to ask you to—I came to tell you—oh, John, I want to come back to you! Can't you make it a little easy for me to tell you that——"

She stopped breathlessly, and both hands were pressed against her breast, but John did not see her. He had not moved from the spot where she had first seen him, but now he turned away from her, as though he could not endure to look upon her.

"I heard you play last night," he said.

"Yes, I know you did, John!" Janet's impetuous voice sounded strange after the curious deadness in John's tones. "I was so glad. I thought that that would make it easier. I thought that you would understand."

"That I would understand?" he questioned. "That it would be

easier?" For the first time, there was a note of passion in his voice, and Janet leaned toward it, but she shrank from the harsh laugh that followed his words. "I do understand now. I do understand now what your career is. I know that you are the great artist you claimed to be. I know that you belong to the world, and I know that I have no place in that world. I learned all that last night. I understood all that last night."

"But, John, you *don't* understand, you don't understand at all. All that—my career——"

"Yes, your career," John interrupted. "Last night, for the first time, I accepted your career."

"But I did not come—I did not even mean to speak of my career to-day, John."

"And of what else would you speak?" he demanded. "I tell you that last night, for the first time, I accepted your career. For the first time I realized that it is, as you said, all of you—all of your life. I realized as I had not realized before that I had no place in your life. I knew that I had never had any place in your life. I am ready now. I will do whatever you want. I will do whatever you came to ask me to do."

"Then take me back!" she cried. "Want me to come back!"

"I said that I would do whatever you came to ask me to do," he answered coldly. "Because you are moved by some childish sympathy for the pain you think you see, do you imagine that I will consent to take some infinitesimal bit of pity, the small atom of yourself that you can spare from your career?"

"But I tell you, John, that that is all over, that it is all at an end." To Janet, John seemed strangely dull.

"And I heard you play last night," he answered. "Last night, for the first time, I heard you, I tell you. What more do I need than that to prove to me that I have no place in your life?"

"But it was for the last time that I was playing, there, last night," Janet again declared passionately, eagerly. "When you heard me I was playing for the last time. And—and that is what I came to tell you to-day."

"To tell me that you would sacrifice your career to—to what?" he demanded. "Surely not to me?"

"It is no sacrifice, John."

"No sacrifice!" He echoed her words, but he walked still further from her. He knew that his self-control was breaking. He knew that he must put space, actual physical space, between them. It would be so easy to take her in his arms and forget all that lay between them!

"I have learned so much. I have learned how small a thing that career of mine was. I have been taught. I have not learned it by

myself. I have been shown—oh, John——” The words that had been so joyously planned all through that morning were so different now, and Janet buried her face in her hands.

She did not see that John was coming nearer and nearer.

“You have been taught!” he cried. He understood at last! It was Breck who had brought this about! It was Breck who had gone to Janet! Breck who had induced Janet to sacrifice her career for him! It was Breck who was responsible for this interview! “You have been taught,” John repeated, “but you have learned your lesson badly. I told Breck that I would have no interference between you and me. I told Breck that I would permit no third person to intervene between my wife and me.”

He was standing quite close to her now, and Janet looked up at him curiously.

“Breck?” she questioned. “But I do not know Breck. I have never heard of Breck. And I do not know what you mean, John. There is no third person intervening between you and me.” But even in that instant the smile crept into the corners of her lips. “Oh, John,” she cried, “if a third person should intervene between us, a third person who is as near to you as he is to me, who should be as dear to you as he is to me—oh, John—John!”

Janet stopped and looked at John, but John was not looking at her. His eyes were fixed on a man, a stranger to Janet, who was standing at the door. Realizing that this was indeed no time for the intervention of a third party, Janet drew her coat about her, and, with no detaining hand stretched toward her, left the room and the house.

John, his eyes on Breck, leaned heavily against the chair that Janet had left, his hand moving weakly in the direction she had gone.

“You see?” he cried.

“She came herself, John?” Breck demanded. “And you have let her go again! Ah, I should have given you her message last night. I should have delivered that message of love.”

“Her message!” John’s voice seemed to traverse a long, painful distance. “Janet’s message? Janet does not know you. She could have sent no message by you. Ah, my God! Janet has—Janet has deceived me!”

Hermann saw now that John’s eyes, that were still fixed on him, did not see him. He sprang forward, but before he could cross the room John had fallen heavily across the chair where Janet had been sitting.

XXIV.

WHEN Janet left the drawing-room she had no definite intention of leaving the house. She thought that she might go up-stairs and wait, even that she might wait in some shadowy corner of the wide hall.

Surely John would not let this stranger detain him long. But the servant who had admitted Breck was still standing in the hall, and he opened the front door for Janet. She could not explain to the servant. There seemed nothing for her to do but to go out into the street. But she could wait in the street. She could walk about in the park. Then, all at once, she realized that she was tired, and, motioning to an empty hansom that was passing, she told the driver to take her home.

She was very sure that John would come to her in the evening, that he would send her some message, and she waited. No message came, however, and she wondered if it was possible that John had not understood. She wondered, too, what he had meant by Breck. Who was Breck, and what had he to do with her or with John? Then she remembered the stranger who had walked into the drawing-room unannounced, and at the same instant she remembered that she had seen the man somewhere before. Ah, of course, he was Breck! She had met him—was it at Amalie von Kussmann's? But it was somewhere! She had met him long ago, before she had known John; while she was still absorbed in her music, in her career.

But what had Breck to do with John? Why had John said that he had told Breck this and told Breck that?

And still Janet waited. She waited with all the patience she could command. She waited until her patience was quite exhausted, and still no word, no message, came from John. For a short space of time she wondered if she ought to go again to her husband's house. But she had no one to ask if such a course would be wise or not. She could not speak to Miss Marchmont about a thing like that. She could not tell Miss Marchmont the thing that she wanted to tell John. John must know it first. John must hear first of the joy that was coming to her and to him.

And then, quite late one afternoon, across Janet's troubled face flashed the smile that drew the dimples so deep into the corners of her mouth, and she hesitated no longer.

XXV.

To Janet's question, the servant answered that Mr. Vandegrift was at home, that Mr. Vandegrift was very ill, and Janet, waiting to hear no more, brushed past him into the house.

"He is up-stairs?" she questioned. Already she was half-way up.

"But the nurses! The doctors!" The servant's voice held caution in every subdued tone.

Janet stopped for a second. "Nurses? Doctors?" she asked. "Is he so very ill, then?"

But she did not wait for an answer. She hurried on to the upper floor. On the top step she met Breck.

"Mrs. Vandegrift!" He, too, spoke in a whisper.

"Ah, that is so good, so good!" Janet cried impulsively, for even then she could rejoice in hearing her own name once more. Quite unconsciously she held out both hands to Breck. "But John, my husband—is he very ill?"

"Yes, John is very, very ill," Breck answered, leading the way, Janet following, across the hall. They had stood for a second near John's closed door, and the room into which Hermann went was Janet's old dressing-room. It was just as she had left it that night when she had rushed from her husband's house, and now, for an instant, she could hear nothing, see nothing. Then, slowly, Breck's words reached her ears.

"He has been desperately ill for four days."

"Four days!" Janet echoed. "But it is four days ago that I was here."

"It was then that the attack—that the attack came on," Breck informed her.

"Then? When I left him?" Janet's voice expressed her inability to comprehend what Breck was trying to tell her.

"Yes, he has not been conscious for a moment since then," Breck answered.

Janet had thrown her coat and hat upon a chair.

"I must see him! I must see him at once," she cried.

But Breck held up a warning hand.

"No one can see him," he said.

"But I am his wife," Janet persisted.

"He knows no one," Breck hurried to assure her. "He has known no one since you left him that afternoon. The doctors say that more than his life—his reason—hangs in the balance now. He must not be disturbed in any way."

"I—I must see the doctor, myself," Janet answered. "Is he here now? Will he be here soon? Can't I even see the nurse now? Oh, to think that this is all my fault! To think that I have brought this to John!"

She was talking only to herself, but Breck answered her.

"No, you cannot blame yourself. I have been feeling that it was in reality all my fault that things had reached this crisis. I have been with John so closely. I should have seen how this was preying on him, mind and body. I could have done something. But he was so determined that I should do nothing, that I could do nothing. He wanted no intervention."

"Ah, that is what he said to me!" Janet interrupted. "He said that he had told Breck that he would have no intervention from any third party. He must have thought that you had sent me to him. And

I was trying to tell him! Oh, why, why did you come in then? He might have heard me! He might have understood!"

But Vandegrift had heard nothing, had understood nothing. The last sane image on his brain was Janet saying that she did not know Breck, Breck claiming that Janet had given him a message, and Janet pleading for some third person who had persuaded her to come back, who would explain it all to him. And after that had come a swift descent into darkness and oblivion. If a tiny gleam of light flashed across the darkness, it showed Breck and Janet, Janet and Breck. But it was days and weeks before even these flashes of light came, and in the meantime the fever had ebbed and flowed, ebbed and flowed, sometimes rising perilously near that flood tide that bears the soul out beyond the confines of the body, sometimes slipping out so far that it seemed almost impossible for life to sweep back with its current.

John's old family physician and his younger colleague made constant, incessant visits to the sick-bed. At first they had forbidden peremptorily that Janet should even venture into the sick-room, but after a time, either because they could not withstand her prayers or because they realized that their patient was as far beyond the reach of harm as he was of help, they yielded, and Janet, not sharing her vigils with either nurse, sat day and night by John's bed, leaving it only for an occasional, swooning sleep and for the nourishment that the doctors forced upon her. Breck, too, had the freedom of the sick-room, and it was Breck who told Janet all that the doctors would let her know; not only the daily and hourly reports, but the results of the frequent consultations that were held.

During the first weeks, John's delirium held no definite words, no words at all, in reality—merely moans that were wholly unhuman, wholly animal. When, slowly, at long intervals, the mind seemed to be making efforts to regain control of itself, the words it spoke were all the same.

Janet! Hermann! To these was sometimes added a broken, disconnected effort to question either the one or the other concerning that third person. But if at such moments Janet bent over him to speak to him, he merely turned from her as he turned restlessly from the other spectres that haunted the darkness. Neither did Breck's voice reach him more definitely than the voices that spoke out of the vast, empty spaces in which he seemed to wander alone and disconsolate. And all this time the days and weeks were passing, and John's strength was passing with them.

At last there came the day when the old doctor himself had to give his own message to Janet, for Breck refused to bear it. The end was very near, the doctor said, and his hands and arms were ready if Janet

should swoon. But Janet, white and dry-eyed, only asked if the end would come while he was—as he was then—or if he would know her—if only for an instant.

“He may possibly know you,” the doctor answered, “but it will be just at the end, just with the last conscious breath.”

“I must not be away from him then, not for an instant,” Janet was whispering to herself. “For I must tell him. He must know.”

After that the nurse moved quite away from the bed, and Janet’s big chair was drawn closer. Then she sat by John and waited. Part of the time she watched him closely for that short moment of consciousness. It must not pass without her seeing it! And part of the time she sat with closed eyes, her lips moving in a passionate prayer that she had taught herself, a prayer to a God she had found for herself.

And even as she prayed John’s eyes opened. The room was very dim, but he saw Janet’s white face, and he knew that it was Janet, Janet herself, and no spirit of darkness or of light. He tried to speak her name, but his breath could not force the sound to his lips, and then a thought, the first tangible thought that had come to him, flashed through his mind and it was a thought of that third person. All at once John understood. A tremor passed over his body, but he summoned his ragged, feeble strength to quiet it. For Janet’s sake he must be strong. For *its* sake he must be strong. He forced his voice to speak one word:

“Janet!”

In an instant she was on the floor by the side of his bed, his hands held in hers, her face close to his. She could tell him now! But he was speaking, and she listened. The words were broken, slow and far apart, but she heard them quite distinctly.

“It—that third person—it is a very small person, Janet!”

“Oh, my beloved, you know, you know!”

That was all that Janet could say.

And even in that moment that the doctor had said would be so near the end of all moments, there was nothing more that she wanted to say, nothing that she wanted to hear. And soon she felt John’s fingers move in hers.

“Put them about my neck, Janet!” Again the words were slow and broken, but even to Janet they sounded stronger.

The doctor, who had been hurriedly summoned by the nurse, stood back in the shadow and held the nurse by the arm.

“There is nothing to do that she can’t do,” he said. And so they waited.

But the moments slipped by, and at last the doctor, realizing that the end must have come without even a faint struggle, stepped noise-

lessly up to the bed. John's eyes were open, and John's hand held Janet's hand, John's voice was low and clear and almost firm.

"It—it is strong enough to keep me, doctor," he said.

And then John saw for the first time the little smile that drew the dimples so deep into the corners of Janet's mouth.

XXVI.

THE doctor who had said that the end was so near told John that, possibly in a couple of weeks, he might sit up in bed. But in ten days John was sitting, lank and white and weak, in the chair where Janet had sat so long. And John held Janet's hand, and told her that *it* was making him strong, and the deep dimples answered him, for Janet understood. The doctor told him that in a week he might be moved into another room, but in three days he was down in his library. Breck had carried him down, and there did not seem to be much of John to carry, but what there was kissed Janet's hands and whispered that he was hurrying to get strong for *it*, and Janet laid her hand over the dimples that only quivered now into the corners of her lips.

And at last John was really well and really strong, but in all the weeks of his convalescence no word had been spoken of Janet's career. And this in spite of the fact that Miss Marchmont had been installed in the Vandegrift house; in spite of the fact that Herr Treffel had postponed his return to Germany from steamer to steamer and was making almost daily pilgrimages to the old house on the shaded square, merely to find out when he could ask what arrangements he could make for the reappearance of his protégée in the European capitals; in spite of the fact that Hermann Breck was waiting in America only to know whether that ghastly fear would be realized, the fear that had been born when Breck had seen that the Birth of the Soul was synonymous with the birth of love, the triumph of the soul synonymous with the triumph of love.

As for John, he was waiting for Janet to speak of her career—not waiting either, but striving always to put into words the confession of the knowledge that had been born in him on that night when he had gone with Hermann Breck to hear her play; not a knowledge of the music that she played, not any understanding of what that music meant to the throng that listened spellbound, but the knowledge of what it meant to her, of what it must mean to any human soul to be able so to express itself. Half a hundred times he tried to speak, to tell her how he, all ignorant as he was, had learned to appreciate the great God-given talent that was hers, had learned to love her music, not, indeed, as she herself must love it, but as any one must love it who loved her. But half a hundred times the words refused to come, and always it seemed to him that it would be easier if only Janet would

speaking first. As for Janet, she did not know that John did not realize that there was nothing further to be said on the subject. In Janet's mind, it would have been folly to speak of a thing as dead as that old career when—when Life was so near.

But at last Herr Treffel was admitted to Mrs. Vandegrift's presence.

"And you have not gone yet!" Janet cried. "Of course, though, I knew that you had n't. You have been so kind, so constant in your inquiries. I have appreciated it so highly."

"I have been waiting only to see you," Herr Treffel answered slowly.

"And I—and I have been so desperately absorbed in——"

"Oh, I did not mean that as a reproach," Herr Treffel interposed hastily. "I have understood perfectly, and I have waited gladly. I might have written. You might have found time to answer a note, but I wanted a personal interview. When—when are you coming back? When shall I make arrangements for a tour in Europe?"

Janet stared straight at him for an instant.

"But, Herr Treffel," she cried, at last, "did n't you understand? Have n't I told you? All that sort of thing is at an end, quite at an end. All that is over. My dear, dear Herr Treffel, I thought that you would know, that you would understand."

"You mean that you thought I would know that your career was at an end because——"

Herr Treffel had taken off his huge gold eye-glasses and was rubbing them vigorously, as though the glasses were responsible for the dimness of his intellect, but now he replaced them hurriedly to see if that gay laugh had really floated from Janet's parted lips.

"Oh, that foolish little career!" she sighed. "And how we did all hang ourselves up on it!" But instantly she shuddered. "And what a horrible nightmare it proved in the end! Please, please, Herr Treffel, don't speak of it to me again. I—I cannot bear even the sound of the word."

"Ah, but yes," the German musician persisted; "I understand all that it has been to you, this sickness of Mr. Vandegrift, and all; but he is better now. When he is quite well and strong, when you are quite well and strong yourself—then it will all look different to you. You will come back to it. You will come back to me."

"Ah, never, never, never again!" she cried passionately. "It hurts me even to speak of it, even to think of what it has done. I don't mean, of course, that I shall not play any more, that I shall not write any more." She held up her hands and looked at them for an instant. "I—I think—oh, I may go on with that some day, but—it is of very little importance, after all, whether I do or not, and——"

And very soon she dismissed him with a pleasant, affectionate message to his sister and their mutual friends in Germany.

Janet was still resting from this interview with Herr Treffel when Miss Marchmont appeared, her outward calm making a painfully thin veneer over her inward perturbation.

Of course one could n't expect Janet to be reasonable after all she had been through, but——!

"Poor Herr Treffel!" she sighed.

Janet, recalled from a joyous expedition into a land that seemed very unfamiliar and yet was not wholly strange, hid the dimpling corners of her mouth behind a little sigh.

"Yes, poor Herr Treffel!" she echoed. "I really suppose I do feel sorry for Herr Treffel!"

Miss Marchmont wondered if she dared to speak quite freely, or if she should humor her niece in her absurdities.

"I found it very hard to make him understand that what you say now cannot be taken as—why, quite as real sense, you know," she said. "I met him in the hall, and the tears were actually chasing down the poor man's face. Of course I explained as well as I could, and—and I think he understands; but he actually believed that you meant seriously that your career was ended."

Janet's answer to this was a laugh, merry, gay, and light-hearted.

"You know I really don't believe that I laughed at all when I was a child," she said in apology. "I seem to have such a lot of back laughter bubbling up all the time. But really, Aunt Sybil, I wish I could have heard you explaining to Herr Treffel that I was not in my right mind. It was dear of you to let him down so easily, to mitigate the blow by postponing its finality. I've just read that last sentence, but I'm sure it's not half so forcible as the slang expression. Do you think it is? Did I ever use slang when I was a child, Aunt Sybil?"

Miss Marchmont decided that Janet must be humored. Even now her mind seemed to be wandering a little! She started to leave the room, but Janet called her back.

"I've entirely forgotten that I wanted something very much, Aunt Sybil. You will get it for me, won't you?"

And because Janet had to be humored, Miss Marchmont promised that she would.

"I want you to go up to our old home, the big, white house by the church." Janet was evidently repeating words that she had heard, but Miss Marchmont stared in horror. Janet's mind was wandering more than a little! "I want you to find two girls, two girls about as old as I am. One is named Amy and the other is Ysabel. Amy is small and blonde and very exquisite. Ysabel is dark—much darker

than I am—but her eyes are blue instead of brown. Their mothers knew my mother, and I want you to go to them just as if I were that little girl that was left all to you when my father died, and tell them that I want them to come and play with me, just as you would have done if I had not had a career. I want them to come and be my friends." Here Janet saw the horror that had dawned in Miss Marchmont's eyes. "Oh, Aunt Sybil," she laughed, "I'm not crazy, not the least little bit, but I heard those girls talking about me the other day, and I think they'll like me, and I—why, I love them already. You might tell them that when you find them. And now—why, won't you please go and find them now? I've got such a lot of lost time to make up."

Miss Marchmont went, shaking her head sadly. After she had closed the door, Janet sighed.

"Poor Aunt Sybil! She has n't accepted it yet! Not the least little bit in the world! I wonder if she ever can. I wonder if she ever will."

It was easy enough for Janet to dismiss Herr Treffel and Miss Marchmont with little sighs, but her career was to make one more stand for itself. She was still lying in the sunshine when Hermann Breck was announced. She had grown very fond of him during John's illness and convalescence, and had accepted his devotion to her very much as a child accepts the devotion of another child.

"Ah, I'm so glad to see you!" she cried now, stretching her hand toward him. "I've had such a troublesome morning. But you've something formal to say to me! When you make that stiff little German bow I always know that it precedes something very important. If only you had kissed my hand, too, I'd be quite sure that you were going to say that you were starting immediately for Germany, that you were going to leave us." She was mimicking Breck's most formal manner, but he did not smile.

"Yes, you are right," he answered gravely; "it is that that I want to say. I am going immediately. I have only waited until John should be quite strong again, until—— But I want to say something else first. I—I want to tell you that I love you."

"But I know that, Hermann. I know that you love me." Janet's eyes smiled at him and her mouth was friendly.

"Ah, but not that way," Hermann answered, and something in his voice forced the smile from Janet's face.

"Hermann!" she spoke almost frigidly, and then she cried impetuously, "Oh, forgive me, Hermann, but just for the tiniest instant I misunderstood you!"

"No, you did not misunderstand me," he answered. "I want to tell you how much I love you, how I have worshipped you from the

first moment I saw you and—and heard you—in Amalie von Kussmann's rooms. I have told John that I was going to tell you, too. I have told him that he owed it to you to let me tell you."

"I'm—I'm afraid that I don't understand you at all, Hermann," Janet said slowly.

"I told John that I was determined to appeal to you on behalf of this career that you are giving up so easily. I want to appeal to you by the thing that is the holiest to me in all the world, and that is my love for you. John does not even know what it is that you are giving up for his sake. You do not seem to realize it. John loves you, but John is only one man. I love you, and my love stands for the love of the whole world. I want you to know what you are throwing away. A love that gives all and asks nothing has a right to speak. Don't throw away all your marvellous God-given talent merely for this. Don't sacrifice your whole career for which you've lived until now, merely——"

"Merely to be my husband's wife," interrupted Janet, her eyes smiling at him once more. "Oh, Hermann, Hermann, think what you are saying! You speak as though I were sacrificing something real, something genuine. Do you imagine for a moment what the compensation is for that sacrifice? Merely to be my husband's wife. Merely to be a human being. Merely to be a woman with a right to love—yes, to love and to suffer and to feel. To be alive! That is the compensation; and what is the other thing! It is so paltry, so infinitesimal, that it has passed out of my existence absolutely. Oh, Hermann, don't you know that I am a woman, a real live creature, and not that puppet thing you say you loved and worshipped? You love me now. I know that you do, and I accept *that* love, the love that is given to John's wife, as one of the best and dearest of my new possessions, the possessions that I've gained by becoming a woman. Go back to Germany if you like. You'll find some new 'career' to adore, to worship, and you'll change your adoration and your worship from one divinity to another as fast as they appear above your horizon, but you'll love me always. There is no persuasion that can induce me to give up what I have now for what I had. It's utterly useless to try, quite absolutely and utterly useless!"

And so Breck found it. For half an hour he talked to her, but nothing that he could say produced the slightest effect. For a time she laughed at him and rallied him with the same cry:

"And you offer me that in exchange for being John's wife!"

But soon she grew tired and only listened with closed eyes. And at last she said:

"Please, Hermann, I have forgotten it absolutely. It is absolutely a thing of the past. It must not be mentioned ever again."

And then Hermann made his formal, foreign bow, but this time he raised her hand to his lips.

"And I shall remember it," he said, "as long as my life endures."

When John came in, Janet stretched both arms out to him.

"Oh, they've been pestering me so all day long, John, about my career, as they call it. Isn't it stupid of them not to realize that it is ended, quite irrevocably ended?"

John knelt by the couch and held her in his arms. The time had come at last when he could speak the words that had so often been denied to him.

"Ended, sweetheart? It can have no end. It is no more possible for you to end it than it would have been for you to create it."

"But, John," she cried, holding herself away from him with both hands, "surely my career——"

"Ah, your career," he interrupted. "The word's a bugbear, Janet, if you like. To me it sounds a horror. But it's of your music that I'm speaking, the gift you have, the talent, genius, whatever you've a mind to call it, the power of feeling every human joy and sorrow, every human sentiment and passion, and of turning all to sounds that every one may hear. Don't you see, beloved, if this knowledge has come to me, *me*, the densest and most prejudiced of men, what it must mean to all the world beside me?"

"Did you hear all that in my playing, John?" Janet's eyes were shining, her arms were close about his neck.

"That, that, a thousand times that, Janet," he answered. "And if only I might have told you then! If only I might have told you when you came to me here! But my brain was weary and dull, and yet I knew even while you were standing over against that chair, while I stood here, that if only the words could be spoken, I could rest. And always while I was ill I saw you sitting there in your white gown and heard you playing that love song, that love song of the sea—a love song of the soul, it seemed to me—and it seemed to me, too, that if only I could hear you play it again I would get well, and yet I knew, knew all the time, that I, I alone of all men, would never hear you play it again."

Janet's eyes were full of tears, but a faint ripple of laughter slipped across her lips.

"And now you, and you alone of all men, will ever hear it again, for I shall never play again for any one but you and—*and It*."

"Ah, sweetheart, you will play for all the world to hear, and you'll not mind if what it means to me differs from what it means to all the rest."

"To you it must always be a love song, dear," she murmured. She

was suddenly very tired and her head lay wearily on his shoulder. "And then—perhaps—some time—I might show those others—how life can be all—one strong, sweet love song—a strong, sweet love song of the soul."

XXVII.

It was many weeks later when Janet cried out that she was impatient, that it had been ages, simply ages, since she had done anything.

Miss Marchmont slipped into the trap that had been laid in all innocence. Her impatience could no longer be restrained. Janet's idleness had worn Miss Marchmont's nerves to ragged flimsiness.

"It seems to me that I cannot live until you get to work again!" she cried. "I shall die if you do not get back into your career, the career that you were educated and fitted for, the career that is, as you have so often said, your very life."

Half a dozen emotions slipped across Janet's face as she followed her aunt's words. But it was a sweet, serious voice that answered them, a voice that held neither tears nor laughter.

"My career, Aunt Sybil? Was that my career? Is n't this my career? It seems to me that it is. And, Aunt Sybil, I know all that you did for me. I appreciate all that you have given me. But what did I ever know of love? How did I ever live without a mother's love? And now here on the very outermost threshold of my real career I am all handicapped by my lack of knowledge. I know only what *it* has taught me. I, a little human girl, was turned into a career. I, a career, let John love me and gave myself to John. I never knew what love was, even then. I never knew what love was until *it* taught me. My soul was drugged. And I never knew that I had a soul until *it* roused my soul. And yet even now you can stand and talk to me of that mistaken idea that you had and that I had for so long."

But it was beyond Janet's power to convince Miss Marchmont, for love had not laid his hands on Miss Marchmont's eyes, love had never whispered in Miss Marchmont's ears, and love's lessons learned at second-hand are valueless.

XXVIII.

It was only the next day after that when Janet looked at the small white bundle that was laid in her arms.

"What a very little person," she said, "to have known so much, to have done so much!"

But only John could understand just what she meant, just what the child had done, just what it had known and taught.





THE DOUBTING FOLLY

BY GEORGE LINCOLN WALTON, M.D.

THE SECOND OF A SERIES OF FIVE POPULAR PAPERS ON WORRY AND ALLIED MENTAL STATES, WITH PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR SELF-CURE. THE PRECEDING PAPER WAS "WORRY AND OBSESSION" IN THE NOVEMBER NUMBER OF LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE.

Jatgeir. I needed sorrow; others there may be who need faith, or joy—or doubt—

King Skule. Doubt as well?

Jatgeir. Ay; but then must the doubter be strong and sound.

King Skule. And whom call you the unsound doubter?

Jatgeir. He who doubts of his own doubt.

King Skule (slowly). That methinks were death.

Jatgeir. 'Tis worse; 'tis neither day nor night.

King Skule (quickly, as if shaking off his thoughts). Where are my weapons? I will fight and act, not think.

IBSEN (*The Pretenders*, Act IV).

A GENTLEMAN once told me that he rarely passed another in the street without wondering if he had not accosted him in an improper manner. He knew very well that he had not, but the more he dwelt upon the possibility, the more doubtful he became, till the impulse to settle the question became so strong that he would retrace his steps and inquire. He asked if nux vomica would help this trouble! I told him he needed mental training. "I have tried that," he answered. "I keep saying to myself, 'I will not think of it,' but it is no use; my head becomes hot, my sight blurred, my thoughts confused, and the only relief I find is to settle the question." I tried to point out the direction in which he was tending, and told him he must remind himself that even if he had accosted another improperly, it was a trifling matter compared to the injury to himself of giving way to

this compulsion; moreover, the impression he would make upon the other by going back would be even worse than that of having so accosted him; and, finally, he must dwell upon the *probability* that he had not offended the man, instead of the *possibility* that he had. Having pursued this line of thought, he must force himself to think of something else until the besetting impulse was obliterated. I suggested that if a baseball player should become incapacitated for the game, he would not lessen his disappointment by reiterating, "I will not think of baseball," but if he persistently turned his thoughts and his practice to billiards he might in time forget baseball.

"I never played baseball," he replied, "and don't even know the rules!"

This represents an extreme case of the "doubting folly," a case in which the victim could no longer concentrate his thoughts on the simplest proposition outside the narrow circle to which his doubts had restricted him.

If we once allow ourselves to wonder whether we have turned off the water, enclosed the check, or mailed the letter, it is but a step to an uncomfortable frame of mind which can be relieved only by investigating the matter. This compulsion once acceded to, it becomes more and more easy to succumb. The next step is to blur, by constant repetition, the mental image of the act. In extreme cases the doubter, after turning the gas on and off a dozen times, is finally in doubt whether he can trust his own senses.

A certain officer in a bank never succeeded in reaching home after closing hours without returning to try the door of the bank. Upon finding it locked, he would unlock it and disappear within, to open the vault, inspect the securities, and lock them up again.

I once saw a victim of this form of doubt spend at least ten minutes in writing a check, and ten minutes more in inspecting it, and, after all, he had spelled his own name wrong!

Insistent conscious supervision only impairs acts which should have become automatic. We have all heard of the centipede who could no longer proceed upon his journey when it occurred to him to question which foot he should first advance.

To other doubts are often added the doubt of one's own mental balance; but it is a long step from these faulty habits of mind to real mental unbalance, which involves an inability to plan and carry out a line of conduct consistent with one's station.

The banker, compelled by the fear that he has not locked the vault, may return again and again, lock and unlock it a dozen times, may wake in the night bathed in perspiration and toss in his bed or walk the floor till he can satisfy his doubt, but so long as he can carry on his duties he is not insane, though the victim of intense mental suffering.

It took a young man at least fifteen minutes, in my presence, to button his waistcoat. He felt the lower button to reassure himself, then proceeded to the next. He then returned to the lower one, either distrusting his previous observation, or fearing it had become unbuttoned. He then held the lower two with one hand while he buttoned the third with the other. When this point was reached he called his sight to the aid of his feelings, and glued his eyes to the lower while he buttoned the upper, unbuttoning many meantime, to assure himself that he had buttoned them. This young man said he would sometimes stop on his way to the store in doubt whether he was on the right street, a doubt not quieted either by reading the sign or by asking a stranger, for the doubt would obtrude itself whether he could trust his sight and his hearing, and, indeed, whether he were really there or dreaming.

Even this victim of extreme doubting folly conducted his business successfully so long as I knew him, and so comforted himself in general as to attract no further comment than that he was "fussy."

These doubts lead to chronic indecision. How often, in deciding which of two tasks to take up, we waste the time which would have sufficed for the accomplishment of one, if not both.

The doubt and the indecision result directly from over-conscientiousness. It is because of an undue anxiety to do the right thing, even in trivial matters, that the doubter ponders indefinitely over the proper sequence of two equally important (or unimportant) tasks. In the majority of instances it is the right thing for *him* to pounce upon *either*. If he pounces upon the wrong one, and completes it without misgiving, he has at least accomplished something in the way of mental training. The chances are, moreover, that the harm done by doing the wrong thing first was not to be compared to the harm of giving way to his doubt, and either drifting into a state of ineffective revery or fretting himself into a frenzy of anxious uncertainty.

A gentleman once told me that after mailing a letter he would often linger about the box until the postman arrived, and ask permission to inspect his letter, ostensibly to see if he had put on the stamp, but in fact to reassure himself that he had really mailed the missive, although he knew perfectly well that he had done so. The life of the chronic doubter is full of such small deceits, though in most matters such persons are exceptionally conscientious.

This form of over-solicitude is peculiarly liable to attack those in whose hands are important affairs affecting the finances, the lives, or the health of others. I have known more than one case of the abandonment of a chosen occupation on account of the constant anxiety entailed by doubts of this nature. Nor are these doubts limited to the question whether one has done or left undone some particular act.

An equally insistent doubt is that regarding one's general fitness for the undertaking. The doubter may spend upon this question far more time than it would take to acquire the needed facility and experience.

Some one has said that there are two things that no one should worry about: first, the thing that can't be helped, and second, the thing that can. This is peculiarly true of the former. Reflection upon the past is wise; solicitude concerning it is an anachronism.

Suppose one has accepted a certain position and finds himself in doubt of his fitness for that position. Nothing can be more important than for him to decide upon his next line of conduct. Shall he resign or continue? Is he fit for the position, or, if not, can he acquire the fitness without detriment to the office? These are legitimate doubts. But the doubter who finds himself in this predicament adds to these legitimate doubts the question, "Ought I to have accepted the office?" This is the doubt he must learn to eliminate. He must remind himself that he has accepted the position, whether rightly or wrongly, and that the acceptance is ancient history. The question what shall he do next is sufficiently weighty to occupy all his attention without loading his mind with anxious doubts regarding the irrevocable past.

Suppose, in fact, the doubter has made a mistake; how shall he banish the worry? By reminding himself that others have made mistakes, so why should not he, and that it is somewhat egotistic on his part to insist that, whatever others may do, *he* must do everything right. If this line of reasoning fails to console him, let him think of the greater mistakes he might have made.

A financial magnate was once asked how he succeeded in keeping his mind free from worry. He replied, by contemplating the two worst things that could happen to him: losing all his property and going to jail. He had learned the lesson that *one thought can be driven out only by another*.

With regard to immediate doubts. If the over-scrupulous business or professional man, worn out after an exacting day's work, will stop and reflect, he will realize that much of his exhaustion is due to his having filled the day with such doubts as whether he is doing the wrong thing, or the right thing at the wrong time, whether he or some one else will miss an appointment or fail to meet obligations, and whether he or his assistants may make blunders.

Let him resolve some morning that he will proceed that day from task to task without allowing such thoughts to intrude. If he does so he will find that he has succeeded in his work at least as well as usual, and that he is comparatively fresh in the evening.

Why not try this every day?

The subject treated in the January number will be "Hypochondria."



THE SWORD OF LIGHT

BY SEUMAS MACMANUS

ONCE upon a time, long, long ago, there was a Prince in Ireland, who died and left all his castles, and all his cattle, and all his wealth in gold and silver and jewels, to his son, who had always been such a great spendthrift that his father knew well he would soon run through the fortune, even if it had been ten times as great; and, knowing this, the father on his death-bed said to him:

"Jack," says he, "when you have drunk and spent my castle and my cattle and my wealth, and you have nothing else for it, go and hang yourself," says he, "on a certain branch of a certain tree"—mentioning it—"in the garden."

Jack promised this to his father, and then his father died; and right enough, the father was n't cold in the grave till Jack was making the wealth and money spin, and a gay old time of it he had, no doubt, while his fortune lasted. But at the rate he went it could not last always if he owned the wealth of the East; and to the end of his money he came.

And then despair came on the poor fellow, and he saw that his father's advice was a wise one. So to the certain branch of the certain tree that his father had told him of, Jack went; and he tied a rope to the branch and put a noose on the end of it and kicked himself off. But lo and behold you! the moment his weight came on the branch, down broke the branch, and out from the hole in the tree at the spot where the branch tore away from it rolled piles of money, and it was then and again that my glad Jack blessed his father ten times over for having hidden away this store for him, and put him upon such a grand way of finding it.

But though his poor father may have thought otherwise, Jack's loss was no lesson to him. He soon made this money, too, spin by drinking

and carousing and gambling; for a greater gambler than Jack was n't to be found again between the four winds of the world; and the black day come at length when he had n't two gold pieces to rap against one another. And if things had been black for Jack before, they looked far blacker now.

Well, one night at this time Jack was going home from the gambling house where he had spent his very last penny, and he swithering in his own mind what he was going to do at all, at all, or whether there was any use in living any longer; and as he leaped over a ditch, what does he nearly leap on top of only a Big Red Fellow, who was playing cards, his right hand against his left, and he arguing fast and furious for the one hand or the other.

"Well, well, well!" says Jack, says he. "That's the drollest thing ever I have seen. What foolishness are ye at, at all, at all?"

"Come, come," says the Big Fellow, says he, "sit down and have a game of cards with me. I'm ill off for some one to beat, for I have n't got one to play me a game this seven years; and all that time I have been playing the way ye see me, my right hand against my left; and it's no ways fair anyhow, for my right hand's ever and always winning."

"There is n't any use," says Jack, says he, "in my sitting down, for I have n't a penny between me and poverty."

"That's the reason why it is of use for ye to sit down," says the Red Fellow, "for ye may win a fortune off me."

"And what will I stake?" says Jack.

"Oh!" says the other, "ye'll not be at a loss for a stake. Sure, ye can stake yer sarvices to me for a year and a day if I win, and if I lose ye'll have any wish your heart grieves for."

"Good, good!" says Jack, says he. "That's both fair and square, and I'm willing."

And down he sits, and to the game the two of them falls, and it was n't long till the game was decided, and my brave Jack had won.

"Well, what's your pleasure?" says the Red Fellow, says he.

"It is," says Jack, "that my father's castle and court should be mended and built from the deplorable state it has fallen into, that there should be servants in the hall, coaches in the yard, and steeds in their stalls."

"Go home," says the Red Fellow. "You have your wish." And true enough, when my brave Jack reached home, there, to his great rejoicement, he finds his father's castle and court better and finer and grander than ever it had been in the memory of man. There were richly dressed servants in the hall, gold coaches in the yard, and all the stables crammed to the door with steeds the finest that ever were ridden or driven; and Jack was a proud and happy man.

So lucky had he been on that night, that again, about midnight, he could n't resist going to the hill where he met the Red Fellow, to see if he would have the good fortune to fall in with him again; and the good fortune he had, right enough. There he met with the Red Fellow, he seated in the self-same spot, playing his right hand against his left, just like the night before, and he cheating and scolding over the one hand or the other, for all he was worth.

"I'm glad to see ye, Jack," says he. "Will ye sit down till we have a hand at the cards this night again?"

Now, it was little coaxing Jack wanted. Down he sat, staking a year's services against the granting of a wish, and, as good luck would have it, Jack won again.

"What's your wish?" says the Red Fellow.

"It is," says Jack, "that all my father's hills and glens should be stocked again with the cattle and sheep that I drunk and spent."

"Ye have your wish," says the Red Fellow, says he, "and go home."

Home Jack went, rejoicing in his heart; for all the way over the hills and the glens the music in his ears was the lowing of cattle and the bleating of sheep; and when he looked out from his castle window early the next morning, and viewed the hills and the dales alive with fine animals, it was pleasant for Jack's eyes, I tell you.

Well, to make a long story short, Jack was n't yet content, so that night again found him on the hill and playing cards with the Red Fellow again for the self-same stakes. That night again Jack won; and the wish Jack asked was to have for his wife the beautifullest woman in the world, either above ground or below it. This wish did n't more than half please the Red Fellow.

"Oh!" says he, "as you won it, you will have your wish, though that woman I intended for myself." And when Jack got home, the beautifullest woman in the world—for surely she was the beautifullest—was there before him. And now he surely should be happy.

His wife said to him next night: "This time again you may go to meet the Red Fellow, for I see you want to do it; but take one word of advice from me: if you win, as I believe you will, let your wish be this, and only this: to have the pick of all the horses in his stables; and no matter how many or how grand are the horses he shows you, you are to choose none but the worst-looking wee, shaggy, brown nag that he has, and the worst-looking saddle and bridle upon it."

Jack promised her request; and when he met the Red Fellow that night, and they played and he won, and the Red Fellow asked him what was his wish, Jack said:

"My wish is the pick of all the horses in your stables." The Red Fellow he looked glum for a minute, but then he says, "You will have your wish." So he put to his mouth a whistle, and he blew it, and

that instant Jack found himself standing with the Red Fellow in a stable that had three hundred stalls, and a great, beautiful, shining black horse in every stall.

"There's the best horses in my stable," says the Red Fellow. "Which of them will ye have?"

"I'll have none of them," says Jack. Then the Red Fellow looked glum again, but he blew on his whistle, and that instant they were both of them standing in another stable in which were three hundred stalls, with a beautiful chestnut horse in every stall—the finest and grandest animals that Jack had ever seen. "Well, there's my second best stable," says the Red Fellow. "Which of them will ye have?"

"There's none of them pleasin' to me, I thank you," says Jack. "Show me another stable." So the Red Fellow blew the whistle a third time, and they were in a stable in which were three hundred stalls, with beautiful horses, every one as white as the driven snow, standing in each stall.

"There," says the Red Fellow, "that's my third best stable. Which horse will ye have?"

"I will have none of them," says Jack. "There's none of them pleasing to me."

The Red Fellow was mad with anger now, and says he, "I have no other stable—only a stable of wee old nags, that one of them would n't be worth taking with you."

"No matter," says Jack, says he. "Let me see it." So the Red Fellow blew his whistle, and they were standing in the stable of nags. Jack walked down the row of nags till he came to the very last and worst one in it.

"This one," says Jack, says he, "is the one I will take; and that," says he, pointing to the worst and tornest and ugliest saddle and bridle hanging on the walls—"that," says he, "is the saddle and bridle I want."

The Red Fellow was black in the face with rage, and says he: "I will not give you that wretched old nag or that torn old saddle or bridle, for they're one and all a disgrace, and I'll not let the likes of them be seen going out of my stables."

"Come, come, come," says Jack, says he. "I don't want any nonsense; be they bad or be they good, it's my wish to have them, and, since I won the game, my wish is my command." So, raging though the fellow was, he had to let Jack saddle and bridle the old nag; and then Jack got on the nag's back; and three leaps of the nag landed him at his own door.

His lovely wife she was glad to see him back. "And now," she says, "my poor Jack, you have got all in the world you want, and on the peril of your life, and as I love you, never more go to meet the Red

Fellow or to play a game of cards, for if you do you will surely rue it, and I warn you."

Jack promised his wife that he would n't go next or near him again or have anything more to do with him. And he meant to keep his promise; and he did keep it for three days; but on the third night after, the old gambling instinct overcame poor Jack, and he sneaked off unknownst to his wife, and away to the hill again. And, sure enough, in the self-same spot the Red Fellow was there, playing his right hand against his left, and arguing and cheating and scolding and brow-beating the one hand against the other.

"Ye're welcome, Jack," says he; "and will ye sit down and have a game of cards?"

"That's what I come for," says Jack. So down they both of them sits, and plays upon the old terms. And lo and behold you! my poor Jack lost. The Red Fellow, when he found this, he laughed both long and loud.

"For a year and a day now, my boy, you're in my power," says he, "to send you on any service I like; and I have got good service for you, and if you don't perform it you will lose your head."

"Let me hear," says poor Jack, says he, "what the service is, anyhow."

"Hear it ye will," says the Red Fellow, "though do it I am afeard ye never will. It is," says he, "two things: to find for me who killed the Knight of Glendoraha; and to fetch me the Sword of Light that is owned by the King of the Eastern World—and that within a year and a day, or else lose your head."

Full sadly and sorrowfully poor Jack he went home, and the wife saw him in such low spirits next day that she knew well there was something wrong, and she worried him up and down to tell her what it was; and Jack at length told her.

"My poor Jack," says she, "you would n't be warned by me. It's bad, and bad, and bad enough; but God is good," says she, "and there's no knowing what good fortune is in store for us. So we will take it as lightly as we can, and hope for the best."

Jack he was for setting off at once on the search, but she would n't let him. She said, "If it can be got in twelve months, it can surely be got in nine, so you will spend three months with me, for maybe I will never see you more." Jack he agreed; and when the three months were spent the wife said, "If the Sword of Light can be got in nine months, it can be surely got in six; so you will spend three more months with me." And Jack he spent three more. Then she said, "If the Sword of Light can be got in six months, it can surely be got in three; and so you will spend three more months with me." And another three months Jack did spend. Then there was nine months of it gone, and both of

them agreed that though it was sad and sad, they'd have to part. She told Jack that the King of the Eastern World was brother to her own father, and if any one could help him her father could and would. She told him that Gillie Ruadh of the Hill, who was the man with whom he had been playing cards, was a bad man who had always hated her father and her uncle; he had stolen her from her father's mountain to make her his wife; and he had stolen her father's steed of swiftness, which was the nag that Jack now owned. He was a man of many powers, and the only thing that kept him under was the fact that the King of the Eastern World owned the Sword of Light, which kept him in mortal terror. If he had that Sword, she said, he meant to rule and ruin the world. She mounted Jack upon the nag, and before she parted with him she gave him her ring. She told him to ride to her father's castle in the Indies, and when he showed that ring as a token, her father would assist him all was in his power. Then Jack kissed her and set off.

At every bound the steed gave he cleared seven hills, seven rills, and seven glens; he could catch the swift wind before, and the swift wind behind could not catch him. And after a long and long journey, over hills and leas, lands and seas, Jack reached the castle of the King of the Indies, who was his wife's father. The King knew his own steed. He welcomed Jack, who did n't yet tell he had married his daughter, and he spread a feast in his honor. At the feast, when Jack was filling out a glass of wine for the Queen, he dropped his wife's ring in it, and when she drank the wine and found the ring, she and the King knew it, and asked Jack how he had come by it; and Jack told them. And then there was wonder and rejoicing, for when the Gillie Ruadh had carried their daughter away they thought she was lost to them forever.

Nothing now was too good for Jack, and he was treated like a King. Next day he told the King of the Indies the journey on which he had come, and he asked his advice and assistance.

He told Jack that he had come on a perilous enterprise. The Gillie Ruadh, he said, had won each game and sent three thousand heroes on that enterprise before, and no one of them ever returned alive; but he prayed and hoped it would be better with poor Jack. He said, "I will give you the best advice I can, anyhow, and do all that's in my power to get you the information and the Sword. The King of the Eastern World," says he, "lives from here a long day's journey on your nag. He has three walls round his castle, and every wall is three miles high, and every gate defies the power of man to get through. In his castle there are twelve rooms, one within the other, a door to every room, an armed guard upon every door. In the twelfth room the King keeps the Sword of Light, and there he sleeps himself; it is he, too, that knows the secret of who killed the Knight of Glendoraha. What

you will do," says he to Jack, "is to start off to-morrow and ride to his castle. When you get there leap the outside wall, rattle loud on the second gate, and cry out your demand for the Sword of Light to be given you. Lose no time," says he, "but at that instant put your horse at the wall again and clear it and come home before the wind. I will have all my gates lying open for you to dash in. If you make one instant's delay anywhere, you are a dead man."

Jack promised he would do all this; and the next morning, sure enough, he started out upon his nag. It took seven rills, seven hills, and seven glens at every leap; it caught the wind before, and the wind behind could not catch it. He reached the castle of the King of the Eastern World, and, putting his nag at the outside wall, which was three miles high, he cleared it. He rattled on the second gate and shouted as loud as he could shout, "I command the King of the Eastern World to tell me the secret, who killed the Knight of Glendoraha, and to deliver to me the Sword of Light." That instant the three gates and the twelve doors of the castle flew open, and the King of the Eastern World was standing on the door-step with a look of thunder on his face. Jack he didn't wait one moment, but, putting the nag at the wall again, cleared it and went home before the wind. The King of the Eastern World was at his heels with the Sword of Light, which dazzled half the earth whenever it was unsheathed, in his hand; and as Jack dashed in through the gates a third of his nag's tail was cut off, but the gates were closed the next instant, and he was safe. The King and the Queen congratulated poor Jack, and said he had done well.

"On the morrow," says the King, "you will have to repeat the very same performance—only this," says he, "that you will find the outside wall now fallen; and if you are as successful to-morrow, the second wall will fall also. On the third day you will have to do the self-same thing, and then the third wall will fall."

Well, to make a long story short, on the morrow Jack set out and went through the self-same performance, and had the self-same terrible chase after him; and as he and his nag got in through the gates of the friendly King a second third was cut off his nag's tail by the Sword of the King of the Eastern World. But he was successful, and the second wall fell. On the third day he went through the same performance again, and he escaped, too, with the loss of the remaining third of the nag's tail. The King of the Indies congratulated Jack, and said that he was more than fortunate. "When you have done so well so far," says he, "I think you might manage to win through. I'll give you help and directions for the morrow, which will be the final trial."

So on the next day the King gave Jack the magical Harp of Harps which he owned, and Jack slung it over one shoulder, and the King

gave him a bag of withered beech-leaves which he slung over the other shoulder, and set off upon his nag. When he reached the castle of the King of the Eastern World he began to play upon his harp; and when they heard the enchanting music all the servants and all the guards and all the soldiers left every door and thronged out and stood around him, and listened in wonder and in enchantment; and after a while Jack threw among them his bagful of withered beech-leaves, and their senses were so enchanted that they scrambled and fought for the withered leaves, thinking they were gold and jewels. Jack walked into the castle through the twelve doors, playing on his harp as he went. The King, who lay in the twelfth room, was enchanted by the music, too, and fell into a deep and a sweet sleep; and when Jack reached the room he saw the Sword of Light hung in its scabbard above the King's head. As the King of the Indies had warned him that when any man tried to draw the Sword from its scabbard it always gave three leaps that shook, and three roars that startled, half the world, Jack set his teeth and caught the Sword by the hilt and pulled with all his might. It gave the first leap and the first roar; the teeth in Jack's head shook, and he thought his ears would never hear again. The King of the World rolled over in his sleep. At the second pull the Sword of Light gave another leap and another roar greater and louder than the first, and the King rolled over once more, but went to sleep again. Jack gathered all his nerve and all his strength and gave the third and last pull, and he pulled it out of its sheath. It gave a third leap and roar more terrifying far than the other two together, and the third roar aroused the King, but Jack waved the sword over his head and threatened to have his life if he would n't tell him the secret of who killed the Knight of Glendoraha. The King saw he was at Jack's mercy, and he told him, what had never been told to mortal man before, the secret that he himself had killed him. When the King of the Eastern World heard that Gillie Ruadh of the Hill was now to get the Sword of Light, he was in great despair, for he said, "There is now no power in all the world to check him; he will murder and slay all before him."

"Never mind," said Jack; "keep up your heart. Little as you love him, maybe I love him less, and may yet get even with him."

Jack returned to his father-in-law's with the Sword of Light and the secret; and great was the rejoicing there when he came. His father-in-law, too, said that if Gillie Ruadh got the Sword of Light there would never be peace or comfort in the world more. Said he to Jack, "You are under *geasa* to fetch him the Sword and the secret. Bring them to him. When he has got the Sword of Light he will flourish it and say that he has now the power of the world and the most perfect sword in it. Say you in reply that it would be the most perfect only for one fault. He will ask you what is that fault. You will reach

your hand for the Sword to point out the fault, and when you get it in your hand again sweep the head off him."

Jack was rejoiced at these directions. He set out upon his nag, for it was now the last day of his service. The nag took seven rills, seven hills, and seven glens at every leap; it could catch the wind before and the wind behind could not catch it; and at length he reached the hill of Gillie Ruadh and met him there.

"It's welcome you are, Jack," says Gillie Ruadh. "You have got the Sword, and have you got the secret?"

"There's the Sword," says Jack, handing it to him, "and the secret is that it was the King of the Eastern World who killed the Knight of Glendoraha."

"Hurrah!" says Gillie Ruadh of the Hill. "I'll soon revenge it; for I have now the power of the world and the most perfect sword in it."

"The most perfect it would be but for one fault," says Jack.

"What's that?" says Gillie Ruadh. Jack reached his hand for the sword, and the other gave it to him; and the minute Jack got it he cut off Gillie Ruadh's head with one sweep.

Little time he lost then riding home to his wife, who was the rejoiced woman to see him, and the happy one, I tell you. When he had spent long enough with her, feasting and rejoicing, he set out and he brought again to the King of the Eastern World the Sword of Light and made him happy. His wife's father, the King of the Indies, bestowed upon him the steed of swiftness, and gave him half his kingdom as a fortune with his wife; and Jack was crowned King and she was crowned Queen, and there was feasting for a year and a day. There were three hundred fiddlers and three hundred pipers who never ceased playing for all that time. I was there and enjoyed myself, and so would you if you had been at it, too.

And it's the sorrow for you not being there that's the only sorrow I've known then, or since.



ACCLAMATION

BY CLARENCE URMY

WHEN home one came from Rainbowland with riches laden,
 "What luck! What splendid luck!" the people cried,
 And gave no due to Diligence, his fair handmaiden,
 Nor yet to Truth, his faithful, trusty guide!



MISS MEHITABLE'S BACKBONE

BY HELEN TALBOT PORTER

MISS MEHITABLE tucked a piece of tissue paper into an empty box, wrapped up the box carefully, and tied it with pink string; then she turned to her ink-bottle. There were two red spots in her cheeks, and her hand trembled so that she had to wait a moment before she wrote "For my dear Susan, with love and a Merry Christmas from Mehitable."

She never wrote Xmas. "X stands for everything that is hard and inexplicable in mathematics," she explained, "and I will never let X stand for the dear Christ."

Miss Mehitable was a wiry little woman, with a stiff Puritan backbone and the kindest heart in the world. Her black eyes snapped with energy. Her hair was turning gray, but still waved in gentle lines over her forehead. At rest her face was sad, but when she smiled it was as if she said, "God bless you." Her hands were rough with hard work, but even in the darkest hours of her life, when the wolf lurked very near her door, Miss Mehitable was always a proud gentlewoman.

From childhood Miss Mehitable's greatest joy was Christmas, and all through the years she planned what presents to give her friends. The planning had become difficult after her father died, and pride had often made her go hungry that the presents might be as fine as in the old days. No one ever knew the pain it cost her, for the day before Christmas the packages had been finished and directed, and when each of her friends dropped in to leave a remembrance, Miss Mehitable was found with smiling face, and a neat bundle to be handed to the Christmas visitor.

But this winter things had gone from bad to worse. Influenced by an old friend in the city, Miss Mehitable had taken her money out of the bank and bought shares in a great concern. She had never under-

stood it very well, but had trusted the friend, and she discovered too late that it was a giant fraud and that all the money was gone. Her first sorrow was in the terrible awakening to the falseness of her friend. The mortification was so keen she did not tell any one, not even her brother. He was working, on a small salary, for a mining company in the West, and she could not ask him to help her.

The old homestead was too big for herself and Plato, she decided, so she rented it and moved across the road into a little one belonging to the farm. But in November her tenant died, and all she had left was the contents of the sugar-bowl in the garret closet. Now that was empty, and her one hope was that her brother's Christmas present of ten dollars would arrive in time for her to take as much as she dared for her beloved Christmas.

But no, she had been to the post-office twice a day, until the post-mistress had whispered that Miss Mehitable must be expecting a love letter at last. And now she, Miss Mehitable, a member of the Baptist church, a teacher in the Sunday-school, a descendant of Roger Williams himself, must stoop to subterfuge or let it be known that she could not afford even the Christmas presents she loved to give.

She fingered the little package with shrinking fingers; her heart beat so she could almost hear it. Where was Plato? He would give her sympathy. She went to the door and called, when out of the kitchen beyond came Miss Mehitable's best friend, a fox terrier, with a rakish black spot over his left eye, "Received," Miss Mehitable always said, "in a fight for the right."

She called him Plato because he looked so wise, and though she believed Socrates to have been even wiser, he had not been as handsome as Plato; besides, Socrates was a very hard name to speak in a hurry.

For nine years Plato had been her adoring slave. "I'd have married Tom Spencer and been a well-to-do widow now," she used to say with a smile, "but Tom hated dogs, and when it came to choosing between him and Plato, of course I chose Plato." And Plato always understood, and would jump up on her knee and kiss her to show that she had not missed affection, any way.

Plato looked up at her now, wagging his stump of a tail. She leaned over and patted him. "Oh, Plato," she exclaimed, "if you could imagine what I am going to do, you would hate me." But he put his cold little nose reassuringly into her hand and then sat slowly back on hind-legs that were beginning to be a little undependable.

Miss Mehitable watered the geranium, nervously watching the garden gate. The scene before her would have delighted seeing eyes. Each picket of her fence had its little pile of glistening white, like the tiny church steeples that were dotted over the country-side, while the gate-posts had great mounds, as if some one had frosted two huge

plum puddings. Icicles were hanging from the corners of the posts, weeping bright tears on the sunny side, and far down the road were shining snow-drifts piled high. It was a wonderful Christmas picture, but Miss Mehitable did not see its beauty; her heart was heavy with foreboding.

This was Miss Mehitable's Christmas plan. She would give Susan—who always brought her present early—an empty box; Susan's present she would give to Martha Smith; Martha Smith's present to Dorcas Reynolds; Dorcas's present to Liddy Ann Brown; and Liddy Ann's present to John Carpenter. Yet that was a special risk! Suppose the present that must go to John should be strictly feminine—a knitted petticoat or a lace-trimmed apron! It made her shudder, but there was no alternative. John would think that in her haste she had marked the wrong bundle.

What would she do when, on Christmas day, they all came to see her presents? These had been the happiest hours of Miss Mehitable's life, but she must miss the joy this year, and her eyes were misty as she turned the dish-pan over in the sink and wiped it with her damp towel.

She heard a click at the gate, and Susan walked swiftly towards the door. Miss Mehitable gasped; it seemed as if she were about to commit a crime. She had never stooped to deceit before, barring the hiding of her poverty, and that had seemed like a duty to herself and her beloved Roger Williams.

Susan did not stop to knock. "Here I am," she cried cheerily as she walked in, "and I wish you a Merry Christmas, a very Merry Christmas;" and she laid a fat bundle on the kitchen table. "Toodles had kittens this morning, so it made me a little late. I thought I had better stop and drown the lady ones before she knew how many she had. There were three of them, and that leaves only one. I promised a gray one to the little Jones girl for Christmas, and these were all yellow. Toodles never had yellow kittens before, but I'll tell the child that it must be that Santa Claus could n't see the color very well, because the chimney was so dark."

Suddenly Susan paused. "Mehitable, what's the matter? Why don't you talk? Don't you feel good?"

Miss Mehitable started guiltily. "Why, I was listening, Susan."

"You don't always listen so patiently," Susan said suspiciously, "and you have n't sat down either."

Miss Mehitable flushed. "I am going to get your present, Susan. It's in the parlor. No, you can't come," as Susan followed her. "You might guess some of the other bundles."

It was done! She had entered into the path of deceit, and now she could not turn back, but her face was pale.

She was quite herself when she came back and handed the package

to Susan with the same Christmas smile that Susan had seen for so many years.

"Susan," she said warningly, "don't you dare open it till to-morrow. I wrapped it up last night, just before I went to bed, and—and—if the paper is rumpled you may know it was because I was so sleepy." This would help explain things when Susan opened her empty box.

Susan took her departure at once. "I must stop at the store and buy some Christmas greens," she called back. "Can't I order some for you?"

But Miss Mehitable answered hastily, "No, I have more than I want."

She went back to the kitchen and deliberately opened Susan's bundle. Never had she opened a Christmas present ahead of time till now, but, then, to-day was filled with new sensations.

It was a pair of knitted slippers, and for a moment Miss Mehitable's face brightened. How warm and comfortable they would be! Then she remembered—they must go to the next friend who brought a present, and with a sigh she took them into the parlor and wrapped them up in clean paper.

The gate clicked again, and Liddy Ann Brown came slowly up the walk. How different she was from cheery Susan! Pale, timid, and frail, she came like a ghost rather than a living thing. Her very voice seemed from a far-off land, but Miss Mehitable loved her with a motherly love that forgave her her weak indecision, although she hated it with her whole soul, and Liddy Ann adored Miss Mehitable just as Plato did.

Liddy Ann knocked, but the door opened so quickly that she started back and laughed nervously. "Miss Mehitable," she said, catching her breath, "I have brought you a little Christmas present. Mother said she'd be ashamed to give it to the fancy table at the church fair, and you know what mother thinks of church fairs; but I made it, and somehow I sort of thought you would like it. Mother said I was a fool to bring it, but she thinks I'm a fool, any way."

She followed Miss Mehitable into the kitchen and sat down on the edge of the rocker.

"There, there," said Miss Mehitable heartily. "I am proud to be remembered by my little friend Liddy Ann, and you are not a fool either. I do not believe your mother thinks you really are one."

"Miss Mehitable," the girl said irrelevantly, "yesterday Tom asked me again to marry him. I did n't dare tell mother—she would say I was a fool to listen to him;" she laughed hysterically. "He wants me to run away with him, but I don't dare. Mother would be so angry."

Miss Mehitable looked at the girl anxiously. "Do you love him, Liddy Ann?" she asked.

Liddy Ann pondered. "I like him better than I like anybody in

the world—except you. But I don't dare get married; I might be unhappy." She colored shyly. "He says it is his business to make me happy, and for me not to worry; but it is hard to decide anything when you know your mother will say you are a fool whatever you do."

If the romance had not been pitiful, Miss Mehitable would have laughed. How she had made the boys fly when they had made love to her! She wondered if she had been mistaken, like Liddy Ann, only in a different way. Some of those boys had turned out honest, upright men. The clock ticked sharply as the woman and the girl sat silent.

"If you love him, Liddy Ann, marry him!" Miss Mehitable was surprised at her own words. She was advising a girl to disobey her mother. But, then, poor Liddy Ann!

"I'd be glad to do it if I dared," the girl whispered. "I must go now"—she rose. "Mother said, as like as not I'd forget the cream and eggs. Miss Mehitable, if you were a fool like me, you would find it hard to decide things. But if Tom runs away with me, I'll be glad—only I'd never dare face mother."

Liddy Ann hesitated at the door. Could it be possible that Miss Mehitable had forgotten?

"Wait a moment, Liddy Ann. I was so interested in your love affair, I forgot my present for you. I must get it from the parlor."

"For Liddy Ann," she wrote on the newly-wrapped slippers, "with love and a Merry Christmas from Miss Mehitable." Her hand shook so that the words were almost illegible. She blotted it and came into the hall, locking the door behind her. "I could scarcely write last night," she explained, "my hands were so cold, but I guess you can make out who it is for, and who it is from."

"Mother says I'm a fool to bother you with my company, but you won't turn me off even if I do run away with Tom!" Liddy Ann pleaded.

"No," said Miss Mehitable comfortingly; "I will come over and teach you how to make a pie-crust that would make any man happy."

She watched Liddy Ann go down the path, and sighed. Then she sniffed suspiciously at the bundle in her hand. How could she give Liddy Ann's gift to one of her other friends? But it was the only way, unless her brother's money should arrive. Then she would tell them how mixed up she had been, and get all the presents back, and send new ones.

She sat down and opened Liddy Ann's bundle. It was a scent-bag filled tight and hard with musk and tied with pink and blue ribbons. Miss Mehitable took her spectacles off the window-sill and looked at it long and carefully. "Plato"—she shook her head—"we are in a bad fix." Then she threw back her shoulders. "But, Plato, we'll weather this yet." Plato understood that tone of Miss Mehitable's, and his tail

stiffened to the fight; he pricked up his ears to hear the enemy, but no one came and Miss Mehitable did not speak again, so he lay down at her feet and went to sleep.

Far down the road she could see Dorcas Reynolds coming slowly towards the house. Her youngest son was with her, and as he faltered behind she would give the boy's hand decided little jerks. She came in now with a deep-voiced "Merry Christmas!" and dragged Tommy to a chair, taking off three mufflers and a pair of woollen mittens. "Don't go near the stove," she commanded, "or you'll get chilblains. What real Christmas weather this is, Mehitable," and she laid a flat bundle slyly on the table and sat down with her back to it. "We've all got gripe over at our house. My! but you should hear us at night. Sounds more like a dog-house than a place where human beings live. Tommy," she said abruptly, "cough for Miss Mehitable," and the boy obeyed, coughing once quite artificially. His mother was disgusted. "If you can't do better than that," she said severely, "I would not do anything at all;" and, desiring above all things to please, Tommy then coughed so loud that Miss Mehitable covered her ears with her hands.

His mother nodded her approval, then turned to Miss Mehitable. "I wish we could have you to dinner to-morrow, Mehitable, but it would be like asking you to take a meal in a hospital. Tommy has some apples in his pockets for you, and I brought over a piece of cheese to eat with your mince-pie."

"Dorcas"—Miss Mehitable wanted to get it over as soon as possible—"I have a Christmas gift for you, and I will get it if you will excuse me. I keep all my Christmas things in the parlor."

While with great misgivings she was directing Liddy Ann's scent-bag to Dorcas, Dorcas glanced around the kitchen.

"It does n't look as if she was making much preparation for Christmas, but then Mehitable is always forehanded. I wish it was honorable to look into her pantry. I keep hearing rumors that things are going badly with her. I wish I had brought a pie instead of cheese, and potatoes instead of apples, but I was afraid of hurting her feelings."

"Mehitable," she said aloud, as Miss Mehitable came back, "how I do love to sit when I come here! I wish I could spend the day. Those six boys of mine, while they are all blessings, and I thank God I have them, do make a heap of noise, and when I come here I feel as if I'd gone clean back to the days when you and I used to make dolls' clothes and decide what to name our future children. Mehitable, you seem sort of quiet to-day. Do you feel well? What did your brother send you this year?"

"Oh, he always sends money." Miss Mehitable was glad she did not tell an exact lie that time.

"Well, we must be going. Tommy, turn your toes out, and stop pulling that dog's tail—he bites awfully."

Tommy grinned. Plato's bites had been held up for him to fear all his life, and yet he and Plato were the best of friends. "I'll be over after dinner to-morrow to see your presents," she called back.

It was nearly twelve o'clock, and Miss Mehitable moved the tea-kettle to the hot part of the stove, went to the closet and took out some bread for herself and Plato.

Just then the market-wagon stopped at the door. Miss Mehitable shook her head. "I wish Mr. Gardiner would give you a bone, Plato, but I do not like to ask him when I cannot buy anything."

Mr. Gardiner knocked loudly at the door, and Miss Mehitable opened it reluctantly. "No, Mr. Gardiner," she had begun, when he interrupted her.

"This is not a business call to-day, Miss Mehitable. I am taking a few little Christmas presents to my best customers." Miss Mehitable flushed crimson. She was not a good customer now. "I brought you a chicken and a few cranberries, and here is a bone for Plato. He has not been 'round lately, but I know he has not forgotten me, so I just tuck'd this in." Plato smelled the meat and barked joyfully.

Miss Mehitable's voice trembled, but she accepted her present as it was given, as a good customer would. "I think I shall be able to eat more meat when the warm weather comes. The doctors think it is so bad for rheumatism. But this chicken will be a splendid Christmas dinner. Thank you, and Plato thanks you, too." When he had gone tears came into her eyes and rolled slowly down her cheeks. This man was the only one who knew the truth, and he had kept her secret for her. She touched the chicken gently and pushed her fingers into its fat breast. No, she and Plato would not go hungry, and she smiled through her tears.

She had not opened Dorcas Reynolds's present, and now she untied the string. Would this day never pass? Would the second mail never come? What would happen if the money did not come then? She would be found out. Even if she pretended to be ill to-morrow, they would ask to see her presents the next day, and she could not stay ill forever. It seemed to Miss Mehitable that she had been caught in the rapids of Niagara, and was being steadily drawn down, down, down.

The kettle boiled over just then with a steaming sizzle, and Plato growled his disapproval. That tea-kettle was his worst enemy. Never was he peacefully dreaming of happy hunting grounds, where dogs might kill cats and rabbits every day, but that tea-kettle would steam and sizzle and he would be obliged to leave the happy hunt and run for his life. When he was a puppy he had dared it to do its worst, and it had done it—with most unpleasant results. It had n't any kind of a

grip for a good bite, and yet it must have got hold somehow, for the pain was there, and to this day he bore a scar where it had bitten him. No, beware of the tea-kettle; it can fight worse than a cat!

Dorcas had brought Miss Mehitable a gilt frame large enough for the picture of the home of Roger Williams, but her smile faded when she remembered that this must go to Martha Smith, and with a sigh she took it into the cold parlor, wrapped it up in fresh paper and marked it for Martha. John Carpenter never came till just before supper-time, so she could safely do this.

When Miss Mehitable returned Martha Smith was already in sight; she could tell her tall, gaunt outline, and knew she was wearing men's boots in the snow and would wipe her feet like a man when she came into the tiny hall. Miss Mehitable loved Martha Smith more than any of her other friends, for beneath that severe exterior she had found a big-pulsating heart; but even Martha Smith did not know the whole truth about Miss Mehitable's affairs. "It is no business of mine," she would say to those who questioned her. "If Mehitable wants me to know, she will tell me herself, and I do not care whether she has new clothes, or puts new feathers in her bonnet; she is the oldest and best friend I have in the world." But all the time she watched Miss Mehitable furtively, and she saw with anxiety that her friend was growing thin, and that there never seemed to be the toothsome odor of a well-cooked dinner in the kitchen, as there used to be when her father lived.

"You will never guess what I have brought you, Mehitable," said Martha, after the two women had greeted each other. "I made it for you. No one else could possibly wear it."

Miss Mehitable made a sorry attempt at a smile. She was panic-stricken to think of John, to whom this feminine something must go. She handed her own gift to Martha to hide her confusion, but Martha was unsuspicious.

"Now, I want you to promise to take dinner with us to-morrow. We have an uneven table, so you must not say no."

Ah, this was the moment when Miss Mehitable could hold up her head. "Martha, I can't do it. What would I do with my Christmas chicken?"

"I won't take no for an answer. I guess that chicken of yours can wait till day after to-morrow. You can't hurt the feelings of a dead chicken, and you could hurt the feelings of a live friend. Plato is asked, too. We have n't got a cat now, so I won't be afraid of the party turning into a domestic cyclone, like the day he followed you over unbeknownst, when Lady Gray was alive." She laughed at the reminiscence, and Miss Mehitable laughed, too. It did her good—she almost forgot the awful dangers of her Christmas plans.

"Yes, we'll come," she said happily. "I could not have left Plato all alone on Christmas day, but if he can go with me, we'll come."

"Mehitable," Martha said suddenly, "are you well? It seems to me you look mighty peaked, and you don't smile right. I wish you'd ask Dr. Hill for a tonic. I don't think you have been like yourself all winter, and the spring will come hard on you unless you get built up before then."

"No, no," Miss Mehitable answered hastily; "I never was better in my life. Why, I eat like a tramp! I eat everything there is in the house, till Plato gets scared for fear he won't get anything at all."

After a while Martha stood up. "Well, I ought to have gone as soon as I came, but I do like a bit of a chat with you, Mehitable. The winter adds about two miles of road between our houses, even in my walking boots. Come early to-morrow," she called from the gate.

Miss Mehitable's hand trembled when she opened Martha's package. It was a blue dressing-sack, trimmed with white lace. Oh, what should she do! "Plato"—and her voice vibrated with misery—"Plato, we are beaten, we have got to give up." She covered her face with her hands. Plato crawled up on her lap and licked her hands gently. Miss Mehitable needed his deepest sympathy, he knew that, and soon the patient little friend felt her arms tighten around him, and he was sure her courage had come back, as it always had come before.

"I have a box exactly like this one, Plato," she explained confidentially, "and when brother's money comes I'll pack up a big muffler, and we will laugh over my stupidity. But, Plato, suppose the money does n't come!" A wave of terror came over her, but again she mastered it. "A descendant of Roger Williams will find a way," she said proudly. "One would think that my friends were Indians after my scalp."

At last it was time to go for the five o'clock mail. That might save her from sending John the dressing-sack, and, once the money was hers, it would be an easy matter to straighten out the other things. The postmistress shook her head. "Nothing at all for Miss Mehitable Williams."

Miss Mehitable stooped when she walked home, and once her feet tottered like an old woman's. Then a curious expression came into her face, not of hope or comfort, but as if she had made up her mind to take her beating like a martyr and not cry out, whatever it cost; but the expression sat ill on Miss Mehitable's gentle face.

John came before she could tell Plato of her disappointment, and she handed him the box without the Christmas smile. John missed it and looked at her with kindly inquiry. "Mehitable," he said, "you look dead beat. You ought not to have walked to the post-office in this deep snow. I'd have gone for you gladly."

Miss Mehitable laughed, a mirthless little laugh. "John, I just love the snow. Why, I shovelled a path to the wood-house yesterday, without even losing my breath."

The man looked down at her, smiling. "Mehitable, I was telling Aunt Lizzie yesterday that for downright pluckiness you do beat the Dutch."

Miss Mehitable shuddered, but the lamp was smoking, and John thought it was the flicker. He turned it down clumsily, so it almost went out, and then he chuckled. "Any one watching would think I was going to make love to you, Mehitable; but perhaps you know best, after all. I said I'd forget it as long as Aunt Lizzie lived, and she is mighty pert and well now. Remember, you sort of promised me after she's gone. I'd plain starve to death if you did n't come then, and I read in the paper only last week of two old people getting married when they were over seventy."

Miss Mehitable laughed, too, this time. "I think I will marry you when I am sixty, John," she said, with something of her old spirit; "that gives you fifteen years of freedom yet."

She watched the big figure far down the road, the lantern he carried making weird shadows on the snow. Sometimes the figure looked like a huge giant and again like a tiny pigmy.

Her mind wandered back to Liddy Ann. No, this was different. She had gotten along very well without John Carpenter till now, but to-night she had a vague longing for some one to lean on, to help her through this dreadful Christmas day.

When she turned from the window Plato was balanced on his left hind leg, scratching his right ear ferociously. "Plato," she said severely, "you're wrong; there is not one on you;" and Plato stopped guiltily, for he knew it meant another bath if he went on. But to-night Miss Mehitable did not make sure; to his surprise, she seemed to forget him entirely. She was looking at John's package. She did not open it; it was her only present for Christmas day, and she took it into the parlor and laid it on the old melodeon.

After tea, when Plato had some soup from his Christmas bone, and Miss Mehitable an apple besides the bread, she went back into the parlor. This time she took a lamp, and the dreariness of the room shone out more clearly. Plato shivered and ran back to the warm kitchen, but Miss Mehitable set the lamp on the small sewing-table and stood silently looking at the dreary chaos.

There were old boxes of every size, to fit any present that might come, there were white paper and tissue paper and some old newspapers lying on the floor. The string bag was pulled open and showed all kinds of string in hopeless confusion. Not a sprig of green, and she remembered having told Susan that she had more than enough. John

Carpenter's gift tied with red string was the only Christmas touch, and her heart sank with despair.

She pulled the shades down; curious eyes should not see that mournful confusion to-night. But she did not stoop to cry; the Puritan backbone was not even bent. She looked for Plato, but did not find him, and went slowly into the hallway and closed the door. She hesitated, then turned the key. It seemed as if she was shutting the door of her life; the last hope had died out of her heart.

She went into the kitchen and sat down in the rocker, from mere force of habit. When Plato sat himself close to her knee, she did not notice him, but the dog waited patiently. Miss Mehitable looked haggard and old. She had tried so hard; all she wanted was to keep her poverty to herself. She had not asked the dear Lord to give her wealth; only to keep her secret from the prying eyes of her neighbors; but even though her heart was breaking, her eyes were dry as she stared unseeing before her.

How long she sat there she could not tell, but suddenly Plato began to growl and the hair rose on his back as if the kettle had boiled over. She looked down at him absently, but he barked sharply and ran to the doorway into the hall. Now for the first time Miss Mehitable smelt a strange, pungent odor. Something was burning! "Plato," she cried as if the dog could understand, "I left the lighted lamp in the parlor," and she rushed to the hall door.

As she opened it a great wave of smoke struck her full in the face, and she staggered back and closed it quickly. Then she ran to the window and opened it, calling, "Fire, fire! Help! My house is on fire!" But every one was busy with Christmas, and no one heard the shrill, frightened voice.

She got her shawl and ran into the road, and then it was that Susan heard her, and soon Susan's brothers came to Miss Mehitable's aid, while Susan ran for more help.

Miss Mehitable was like one dazed. The yellow flames licking up the wood like live tongues made her faint with fear, the sickening smoke took her breath away as she stood alone by the gate. Voices were shouting far down the road. They were pulling the old hand-engine through the snow, but there was no water; everything was frozen solid on such a night. Miss Mehitable was not cold, however; the fire warmed her body kindly, although it burnt into her soul.

Great beams fell, and sparks were thrown into the air and showered around her. Black clouds of smoke blinded her eyes. She heard a little boy call out, "Ain't it great! A regular Christmas bonfire!" but she did not feel angry; he was only a boy and could not understand. A strange peace was coming over her soul. The Christmas secret was safe!

Susan, who came up just then, saw her smile and wondered if Mehitable had gone crazy. There was only an outline of the house now, with little blue and yellow tongues of flame running along the rafters that were left. Then it was that Miss Mehitable thought of Plato. With a scream, she rushed forward to the burning ruin. "Plato, Plato!" she called in terror, and it was John Carpenter's strong hand on her arm that kept her from running into the very flames. As she stood there her face was livid with anguish. "Plato!" she called, as if it would bring him out of the fire. "Plato!"

Tears rolled down Susan's cheeks. "Mehitable, he may have come away when you did. He was not in the kitchen when brother went there. Did you leave him in the parlor?" But Miss Mehitable could not remember.

She would not, she could not, give up Plato. Her whole soul revolted against it, and for the first time in her life she felt the awful weakness of human will. She did not pray; she could not pray to a God that had let Plato be burned to death. Then she heard the voice of Martha Smith. "Take me home, Martha," she cried. "I am so tired. I fought so hard, and Plato helped me, and now I have nobody." Martha and Susan hoped she would cry, but the little woman stood tearless and pitiful.

Martha put her strong arm around her and drew her away. "I don't believe he was burned, or you would have heard him crying, Mehitable."

Miss Mehitable shook her head drearily. "I want Plato," she repeated. "Oh, I must have Plato!"

They helped her into a sleigh, but she struggled to get out again. "I am not going to leave Plato," she cried; but Martha Smith held her firmly, and after that she sat very still.

Two hours later, when every one had gone home and the burning embers were turning black, a terrified white dog, with a black patch over his left eye, crawled slowly to the ruins, smelling the garden pathway to the gate. When he came to where the sleigh had stood, he lost the scent and went back to the ruins, then put up his head and howled, howled again and again; but though it echoed and reëchoed, no one heard him, and by and by he crawled silently away.

It was a week after Christmas when Martha brought Miss Mehitable's letter. She was still visiting Martha; there was some rag carpet to be made, and Miss Mehitable had promised to stay and help with it. Plato was willing to stay forever; he had hot soup and a bone every day, and, next door, a cat to chase.

Miss Mehitable's hand trembled when she opened the envelope, and she gasped when a check for twenty-five dollars fell into her lap.

The letter contained good news. The mining company had been successful. Her brother's salary had been raised, and would be raised again, and by summer he could send Miss Mehitable money every week. He had waited that he might enclose a larger present in his Christmas letter.

Miss Mehitable's cheeks were white as she stood up. "Take it away, Martha!" she cried hoarsely. "I don't want it. I can't use that money."

"Why, Mehitable," said Martha anxiously, "I am afraid you are sick. It is yours—your brother's Christmas present." She put her arm affectionately around Miss Mehitable, but the little woman shook her off.

"You would n't do that if you knew me, Martha! Oh, Martha, I must tell you something—and yet, Martha, it seems as if it would kill me to know you will never respect me again. It is the hardest part of my punishment. Martha, I am a wicked, sinful woman, and no one has guessed it, but I want you to know everything, and if there is help for the wickedest of sinners, you will tell me.

"I set my house on fire myself, Martha. I was so poor I was ashamed. I wanted to keep it from people. I was proud, and wanted to give as fine Christmas presents as I ever had. I wanted to hide my poverty. I expected my brother's money to come in time, but it did not come, and then I planned to deceive—I, a Baptist, a descendant of Roger Williams." Her voice trembled so she had to stop for a moment.

"I gave Susan an empty box, I gave Susan's present to Liddy Ann, and Liddy Ann's present to Dorcas, and Dorcas's present to you, and your present to John Carpenter. I thought the money would come in time to save me, but it did not. You were all coming to see my presents, and I was beaten. I took a lighted lamp into the parlor and tied a string to it and put the string under the door and pulled it, and then I waited. I did not mean to burn anything but the papers and boxes and the presents and greens that I had boasted of, but the whole house burned down. It was my punishment, and I thought Plato was burned, too, and then I hated everybody, I even hated God. But He gave me back Plato and let my brother send me this money to-day. God has done all this for me, Martha, and how can I get His forgiveness?"

Miss Mehitable sank into a chair and covered her face with her hands. Then Martha went to her and the long arms encircled her tightly, and when Miss Mehitable broke down Martha cried, too.

"Oh, Mehitable," she whispered. "It was awful, but it was my fault, too, Mehitable. I never helped you. I wanted to help, but I did not know how, and so all this trouble came to you. But God understands, Mehitable; He knows you did not mean to burn your house. He knows how you hated to deceive, and He forgives you—I know He

forgives you, as surely as I know my name is Martha Smith. You and I will live this down together, Mehitable, for you must spend the winter with me."

Miss Mehitable stared at her in amazement. "You trust me, Martha?" Her voice faltered. "Are n't you afraid I will set your house on fire, too?"

Then Martha smiled. "No, Mehitable; you know the danger of fire better than I do now. I am not afraid."

Miss Mehitable shook her head. "I can't seem to realize that you can forgive me, Martha," she said wistfully; "but if you can, I believe God will forgive me, too."

She was silent a moment, then raised her head with her old energy, and there was a subdued twinkle in her eyes. "There could not be any one more particular than you, Martha;" and when Martha laughed, Miss Mehitable laughed with her.



TWO CHRISTMAS POEMS

BY CHARLES L. O'DONNELL

AFTER NOEL

SNOWED over with the moonlight,
Or turning back the noon-light,
Down through the grooves of space
Earth swung its old, slow way.
But, thronging the rim of heaven,
Angels from morn till even,
Watched earth with reverent pace
Silent its orbit trace—
Cradle wherein God lay.

ELEVATION

THRONED in His Mother's arms,
Christ rests in slumber sweet;
Except at God's right hand,
For Him no higher seat.

HOW MRS. CARRAWAY WENT TO THE EXPOSITION

By Edith Morgan Willett

Author of "Under the Black Causack," Etc.

O H, yes! I expected to go from the start. The Jamestown Exposition was one of the year's pleasant possibilities, and what rice-planter's year does not teem with them?—that is, for nine months out of the twelve (until harvest). In the other three, as a rule, pleasant possibilities are non-existent.

About the middle of May, when, to speak figuratively, hope spread itself in acres of green all over our "Runnymede" fields, we first made our plans, Dick figuring out indisputably in the evenings, over his briar-wood and stub pencil, that the crop ought to furnish my trip to Jamestown (he could n't possibly get off) quite comfortably, in addition to the new buggy we needed and the new seed-rice we could n't do without.

Of course I did n't care to talk about the matter (what rice-planter's wife would think of making a positive statement more than a week ahead?), so I only mentioned carelessly to a few of our neighbors, including Mrs. Bentley, that I should probably go to the exposition that summer.

I'm afraid there was a wicked satisfaction in the thought of the nights Mrs. Bentley would probably lie awake (she suffers acutely from that trying mental disease called "Other-people's-affairs-on-the-brain") puzzling over how we could possibly carry out those plans without ending in either the poor-house or the penitentiary.

Well, when June came, and with it the move to the Pine-land settlement, where we rice-planters migrate for the unhealthy season, people began to ask when I was going to the exposition; and for the sake of quiet, I announced definitely that I could n't possibly get off before the first week in August!

It did n't seem worth while even to mention this to Dick at the time, for really when he came home tired and cross those June evenings there were so many more pressing matters to discuss—the need of ready money for the "hands," and the caterpillars that were beginning

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to eat up the rice, for instance—that we had somehow stopped talking of my going to the exposition at all.

It was about the first of July that Mrs. Bentley dropped in with the hotel circulars.

"It came over me last night, my dear," she began solemnly, "that you probably have n't even *thought* of engaging rooms for the exposition. You 'll have to write at once if you really have any idea of getting there."

Here the piercing look in her eye said plainly, "Since you really have n't any, now is the time to own up, Felicia Carraway! You can't trifle with *me* any longer!"

I am sure you could have felled Mrs. Bentley with an ostrich plume when I told her composedly that I had already bespoken a room at the St. Regis, the best hotel in Norfolk, for a week. She could n't get over the shock all through that visit (you see, every one else in the village had gone to boarding-houses for three or four days at a time), and she went away at the end of it as limp as a turkey-cock in a thunder-storm to spread abroad the astonishing news.

It seemed about time now to mention my plans to Dick, and the next afternoon, when we were driving back from the plantation in the buck-board, which was crammed with unsold tomatoes and melons—the surplus of our kitchen garden, too ripe for the Rivertown market—I told him gently but firmly that I was booked for Jamestown on Tuesday.

He took it beautifully, only asking in rather a forcible way how I intended to go.

I outlined my plan as alluringly as possible, but I may as well state that it took all my powers of persuasion to make him consent to it. Fortunately for me, Dick has a saving sense of humor!

"Do you really think you 'll get any fun out of it?" he asked at length, discouragingly, though I saw his eyes were a little squeezed at the corners.

"Oh, yes, it will be the greatest lark," I protested, "and so improving! Seeing the exposition in this way, I shall be able to take it in thoroughly at my leisure, and at the same time avoid heat, crowds, and noise, which I abominate—not to mention expense."

I started on Tuesday, the sixth, Dick driving me down to the station in the buck-board and my mohair suit and écu hat.

The neighbors were all out on their verandas, and handkerchiefs were waving from each bungalow as we passed. Mrs. Bentley, who "wanted to see the last of her dear Felicia" (also to prevent the possibility of escape at the last moment), went down to see me get on the train.

Only a few fellow-passengers and the porter saw me get off again

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at Upton, fifteen miles away, where Dick met me with the buck-board; and oh, the fun of it, driving home in the dead of night through a slumbering, hoodwinked village, both of us chuckling over how easily and cleverly we had outwitted them all!

For it took just twenty-five cents—the fare to Upton—to give every one the impression (wrong, I admit, but imperative,) that I had gone to the Jamestown Exposition.

But oh, the courage it took to keep that impression up!

The next day, when Dick drove away to the plantation, leaving me all alone in a supposed-to-be-empty house, I had all the sensations of a condemned criminal hiding from justice; and yet with it all, I must confess, I felt a dreadful, guilty enjoyment of the situation.

No excitement of sight-seeing in Jamestown, for instance, could have given me the fascinated thrills with which I watched Mrs. Bentley rocking tranquilly on the veranda opposite, just one hundred yards away, and realized with an awful delight that only the closed shutters and a flimsy muslin curtain were between me and detection.

I am sure no magnificent hotel meals could have compared with the charms of our tête-à-tête dinner that night, Amarylys, the cook, keeping watch and ward at the pantry-door (she was my old nurse and kept many a secret in courting days); and to me, the glow of Dick's cigar, as we sat happily and surreptitiously on the back-steps afterwards, was *dearer* than the costliest illumination Jamestown could produce.

On the whole, no one could have enjoyed the first day at the exposition more than I!

My second day was not quite as successful. I had forgotten that the Ellisons were giving a card-party that Thursday—until I saw all the village, in their best organdies and muslins, disappearing into the bungalow next door.

The Ellisons give delightful card-parties (they had lobster-salad and Newport ice-cream at this one, I heard afterwards, besides fascinating prizes), and I should have loved to go to this one if—if I had n't been in Jamestown!

In order to convince myself that I was really five hundred miles away and enjoying myself hugely, instead of sitting at home feeling lonely and left out, I turned my back to the window and the voices and laughter next door, and wrote quite truthfully, with the help of an exposition booklet:

MY DEAREST DICK:

I am missing you dreadfully. How I long to have you here in this attractive place!

So far as I can see, the Jamestown Exposition is quite up to all the descriptions in the magazines.

Really, the scene in the afternoons, with the water sparkling in

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the distance, the white sails flashing, the band playing national airs, and the grounds thronged with gaily dressed people,—their colors rivaling the flowers in the *parterre*,—is indescribably beautiful! [At any rate, so the booklet said!]

This morning I managed to see thoroughly [in one or two magazines] the Auditorium and Administration Buildings, the Cotton-Oil Palace (the last with its "Snowdrift Booth," where lovely maidens give you anything you could possibly want to eat, from mayonnaise dressing to ice-cream, made out of cotton-flour), and [in a newspaper account] the buildings devoted to Education and Social Economy, Textile and Manufactures, and the States Exhibit Palace, and I was not in the least bit tired. [I knew this would impress Mrs. Bentley.]

To-night there will be a concert and a marvellous pyrotechnic display, not to mention the motor-boat carnival [see booklet], which promises to be delightful.

This hotel is really palatial [according to the circulars]. Meals are *à la carte*, with every imaginable good thing.

My room [I had spoken of it till I felt it really ought to belong to me!] has four French windows opening on a balcony which commands a beautiful view of the river [see circular], and I really could n't have more home comforts if I were in my own house!

I can't reproduce here the whole of that work of art, with its minute description of each building. The village insisted on printing all my letters in our county paper on my return from Jamestown.

As soon as Dick came that evening, I sent him right over with it to the Whitredges'—she was Sallie Wentworth, and an old flame of Dick's. I did n't mind impressing her a little with my "first letter from the exposition"; what I did mind was her impressing Dick for tea and cards!

Little cat! She said that she simply would n't hear of his spending the evening in that lonely house!

And it *was* lonely!

I am sure no homeless wanderer in far-away Jamestown could have felt more utterly bereft, more cut off from friends and kindred, than I on my own back-steps that night—my second night at the exposition!

I suppose the peril of a fictitious existence is its tendency to become more real to one than reality itself.

I know that when I was writing to Dick in the dining-room on Friday, my third day at the exposition, I became so completely carried away by my own descriptions as to lose all consciousness of immediate surroundings.

The dining-room door creaked open, and some one appeared on the threshold, but for the moment I was at Jamestown, journeying merrily through the "Streets of Cairo," the "Temple of Mirth," and other attractions on the "War-Path."

Several seconds passed before I awoke to the peril I was in.

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There in the doorway stood Cupid, Mrs. Singleton's small colored boy, staring at me as if I were a ghost. It seems he had been sent over with a tea invitation for Dick (which I made him decline under the plea of having a letter to finish for the Jamestown mail).

Let me say here that I shall never be afraid of ghosts any more. Henceforth I shall only sympathize with them deeply. I know just what they feel—poor, lonely, unpopular creatures! I have occupied their position, and it is a most trying, undignified one.

The Singletons' pickaninny *thought* he had seen a ghost, but it took all of Amarylys's craft, and most of her cookies, to convince him that I *was* one; also a new ten-cent piece to persuade him not to mention the fact to anybody.

Wonderful to state, he has kept his word up to this day, but I tremble sometimes at the thought (and it is a humiliating thought) that my whole standing in the village depends on the superstition and veracity of a small dorky!

Saturday was my fourth day at the exposition, and also the day of Dick's surprise party—a great success so far as the surprise part of it was concerned!

I shall never forget the shock I felt at the tramp of feet in the hall that night just as Dick and I were sitting down to our cozy, tête-à-tête dinner.

I had barely time to fly up-stairs when the dining-room door burst open, and there they were—the Russell boys, Jack Uptogrove, and that horrid Mr. Fisher, "come to keep Dick from having a lonely evening in Mrs. Carraway's absence"!

The laws of hospitality demand that I draw the veil on that night's happenings.

Dick argues (quite sensibly) that if I had really been at Jamestown (I'm sure he wished me there that night!) I should n't have been up-stairs listening (through the floor) to the noise they made and those vulgar songs, and I should n't have known about Jack Uptogrove getting so disgracefully intoxicated.

Ignorance may be bliss, but now that I *do* know just what happens when I am supposed to be away, I shall never, *never*, even make believe to leave him again so long as I live!

Why is it, I wonder, that one is so often punished for an unselfish, noble action? If I had not heroically insisted on Dick's going to church that next morning, I would have been spared the most ghastly and terrifying experience of my life!

This is the way it happened.

Having used up most of my sight-seeing (in magazine articles) by this time, I had decided to spend my fifth morning at the exposition in a gondola, "drifting dreamily" (in a letter to Dick) "through beau-

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tiful Canoe Trail and neighboring waters" (see description in Official Guide) "along with the current, and under the very shadow of the towering pines," when there came a loud knock at the front-door.

There was no one to answer it. I held my breath. Oh, why had I rashly allowed Amarylys to go to see her sick sister?

Another knock!

I racked my brains. Could I have insanely forgotten to fasten that front door?

The next instant I heard it opened softly and some one enter the house. Footsteps were coming distinctly up the hall.

It was an awful moment for me. Fleeing, panic-stricken, across the dining-room, I slipped into the parlor beyond, catching through the crack in the dining-room door a fleeting glimpse of Mrs. Bentley stepping majestically in, a plate of wafers in her hand. "She's putting them on the sideboard," I told myself, as I heard the silver being moved about, with, I must confess, a gleam of satisfaction, for it had all been cleaned beautifully the day before.

The steps began again.

"Of course she's going away now," I argued half-heartedly.

But Mrs. Bentley did not go away!

The spirit of discovery was upon her, and it was not every morning that she had a deserted, defenseless house at her mercy!

People in the village would hardly believe me if I told them—and the worst of it is, I *can't* tell them!—what that woman did next! And I myself can never tell her what I think of her, which is the "most unkindest cut of all"!

Instead of being able to turn her in righteous indignation out of my own house, I, the lawful mistress of it, had to cower ignominiously in a dark corner of the front hall, listening helplessly to distant closet doors opening, drawers shutting, as Mrs. Bentley pried unmolested into the most sacred recesses of my store-room.

"At any rate, she won't dare to come up-stairs," I fancied, as I fled up at the sound of the returning footsteps.

Vain hope!

Before I could even reach my room there was an ominous creak of the banisters, and by the time I had shut myself up in the wardrobe my enemy was in the upper hall, just outside.

The calm of sheer desperation came over me. All hope of escape was gone, but I was not going to surrender tamely. Mrs. Bentley should rue this day that she found the supposedly absent Felicia Carraway at home!

I can't tell you the dark, murderous thoughts that went through my mind as I heard her overhauling Dick's collars and ties, his dressing-room having furnished an incidental diversion in the line of march to my room.

She was actually on the threshold, and I was grimly clutching the wardrobe door, on the point of my meditated sortie, when far in the distance came a long-expected, blessed sound, the slam of the kitchen door.

Amarylys to the rescue!

Never shall I forget the way Mrs. Bentley double-quickened out of my room that morning, or the swift retreat she beat down the stairs two steps at a time.

Just as she reached the front door it opened suddenly from the outside, and, through my own hysterical giggles, I could hear Mrs. Bentley explaining breathlessly to some one who had just stepped in—obviously Dick—that she had taken the liberty of putting a plate of wafers for his supper on the sideboard, where the flies could not reach them!

The next day I returned from the exposition.

I was so anxious to get back that I really could not pretend to stay away from home another moment.

I reached the village on the night train—from Upton—and was on the veranda the next morning to greet every one when they dropped in to welcome me back—looking, they all said, wonderfully fresh after my long railway journey and strenuous week at Jamestown.

I seem to be considered quite an authority on the exposition since my return, and I really know much more about it than most of the people who have been there. Mrs. Bentley listens with great respect to all I say—especially since we invested in the new buggy. Dick drove me in it to church on Sunday.

But at times when she thinks I'm not looking I catch a puzzled, harassed look on her mobile face, which tells me far more clearly than words can express it that she cannot understand (and I trust she never will as long as I live—in the village) how on earth Felicia Carraway got to that exposition!



GLIMPSES OF WHITTIER

By Frances Campbell Sparhawk

GLIMPSES of Whittier—of the man and the poet—are here given; touches here and there, as space permits. No effort has been made to dilate upon the important events of his life, such as are outlined in any biography; upon his prominent part in the antislavery conflict, and in the formation of the Republican party, through which slavery met its death; upon the Massachusetts homes wherein he spent his long and useful life—Haverhill, where he was born a century ago, and Amesbury, where he lived after his thirtieth year;—only to sketch in barest outline the characteristics of him who as poet and man the world honors and loves.

As a poet should sing of his home, Whittier sang of the beauties of the scenery in and around the town in which he lived, with its walks and drives giving views of hill-top and lake, of stream and ocean. Among the earliest settlements in America, Amesbury is full of history and legends that could not fail to interest Whittier, so versed in early New England history. In the annals of this region, if not of the immediate town, his own family figured largely from early times. And not only had Whittier an interest in its history and its legends and its people, among whom he had intimates and dear friends, but he had a keen eye for its many charms of situation and scenery. With a poet's vision he saw

the winding Powow fold
The green hill in its belt of gold.

And on the "swift Powow" he pictured old "Cobbler Keezar," one of the earliest settlers in the days when, with no mills on its banks, the river stretched away,

Woody and wild and lonesome.

Less than a mile from the poet's Amesbury home, and but a stone's throw from his grave, still stands the house pointed out as that of "Goodman Macey" of Whittier's poem "The Exiles." His "Tent on the Beach" describes the long stretch of Salisbury Beach only seven miles from his home.

Whittier had the greatest interest and pride in the flowers of his

vicinity. He used to say with satisfaction that the flora of Essex County was more rich and varied than that of any other region thereabouts. Once when returning to Amesbury in the train he met one of his friends, who did not live in Amesbury but often visited there, being the niece of Miss C——, a dear friend of the poet and of his mother and sister. As the two were talking together, a boy selling water lilies passed through the car, and the poet bought some which he gave to his companion. As they were looking at the exquisite flowers, he said to her: "Thee'd hardly think that the same Hand that made those made snakes!"



One day as the poet came back to the garden room with his mail, he read to the writer, whom he found there, a letter he had received from a woman of literary fame and brilliant personality, in which she declared her intention of coming to visit him. He remarked of her: "She is one of the most easily entertained visitors I have, for I don't have to answer her—I don't get a chance!" And as he laughed, he well knew that if the writer of the letter had heard him, she would have had her retort ready—for when did Gail Hamilton ever fail of a retort, and a good one?

But the poet himself was never at a loss for a reply. And, unlike many persons who are apt themselves, he enjoyed other people's wit. It was worth a thousand-miles journey to hear him say, "Capital! Capital!" accompanying the words and his laugh with that light blow of his hand upon his knee which was like an exclamation point in pantomime. All his friends knew this habit of his so well.

During the Civil War the wife of the poet's doctor said to him one morning when he was at her house: "Mr. Whittier, what did you mean when you wrote that poem, 'What of the Day?' in 1857, four years before the war? It begins, you know,

A sound of tumult troubles all the air.

It's a perfect prophecy of the present time. What did you mean by it then?" she repeated.

He turned to her and answered her as earnestly as she had spoken. "I did not know myself what I meant by it." And his look finished what more he would have added—that the poem was an inspiration, a real prophecy.

It was during the war that Whittier's sister, Elizabeth, died. The poet was nearly fifty-seven at the time. To the world she is known by the endearing name that he gives her in "Snow-bound"—"our youngest and our darling." By her large circle of friends she was well

loved. As sister, companion, friend, critic,—and as poet also,—she claimed her brother's love; and as one who had long been an invalid, his tenderest devotion.

When with the publication of "Snow-bound" wider fame came to him, and money, he was full of regret that they whom he loved best were not there to share with him his added comforts, and to enjoy more keenly than did he himself the praise poured out upon him. He spoke one day to the writer, who had known him in former times, of how much larger his income was than it used to be, and of how he wished that he could have given his sisters something of what he was having then and did not have when they were with him.

And again, when some strong wind of praise had swept down upon him, he said to her: "If my sister"—he was speaking of Elizabeth—"could have lived to see this day, how happy she would have been!"

But for him

The stars shone through his cypress trees.

Life broadened still more. He lived as he sang:

That Life is ever Lord of Death,
And Love can never lose its own.



Although Whittier never married, he liked to hear of other people entering into the bonds of matrimony. He was far from being like the melancholy Jaques, for he much enjoyed looking at happiness through other men's eyes—yes, and through women's, too. And he was likely to dwell with amusement upon connubial felicities and infelicities. Many of his friends have heard him tell the story of the man with the shrewish wife. On his return home the husband would discover the mood of his better half, and to avoid her in her tantrums, he would cautiously open the house door and throw in his hat. If this remained within, he would follow it; but if it were tossed out again faster than it had entered, its owner wisely withdrew and waited for fairer marital weather.

When one day a young man came with a span of fine horses and carried off one of his nieces to drive, the poet made his comments. He did n't think, he said, that she cared for the young man—it was the span. As to her uncle's opinion, she cared not at all. And he added that he did n't know what he could do about it—unless he could get her a young man with three horses!

But for all the poet's jesting, love's young dreamers were very interesting to him. He was confident that he could have made better matches for certain young persons than they had done for themselves.

And with his vision that nothing escaped, his keen perceptions and infinite tact, more than once he turned the wavering balance of fancy in the head—or heart—of some young man or woman, and, like destiny itself, resolved uncertainty into joy. Where he was thus successful, the persons themselves had no idea of his coöperation, and the marriage invariably turned out well.



In the long winter evenings, when his niece was away from him, at school or teaching, he would often entertain his Scotch housekeeper—who was devoted to his service—with witch stories, the most horrible New England legends that memory could recall from his extensive reading, and imagination color with new vividness. Manner, tone, words, were all calculated to make the flesh creep and the hair stand on end. When she laughed, he would turn upon her severely.

"Margaret, does n't thee believe it?" he would ask.

"Did you see it?" she would demand in turn.

"No," he would confess; "but they told me it was so." And then both would laugh.

To his never-failing sense of humor Whittier owed somewhat of the clearness of his mental outlook and much of his power of retort.

It was in 1869 that he wrote the following characteristic note to his physician and friend in Amesbury:

DEAR DOCTOR:

There is to be what they call a surprise party at Mrs. C——'s this evening—the anniversary of her marriage, forty years ago. They would like to see thee and Mrs. S——, I am sure. It was got up by some of her friends and relatives.

The poet does not mention that he himself was one of the "friends" most active in this endeavor to help a neighbor to tide over one of those hard times plentifully scattered throughout her life. She lived across the little side street from Mr. Whittier, and had been friend and often nurse to his sister Elizabeth. In those days, when trained nurses were scarce in the country, she often went into families to nurse in illness. Her own opportunities of education had been small; and yet the terms on which she lived with the Whittier family were in themselves opportunities. Her admiration of the poet showed her appreciation of these. Moreover, she was a reader, and life had sharpened her naturally excellent wits and enlarged her heart.

Whittier recognized her love of books and her good literary judgment. One day when she was in the house he came out of the garden room with a volume of "Mrs. Jamieson's" in his hand, and, reading to

Mrs. C—— that writer's account of the origin of the "stars and stripes," he remarked that it would be a good subject for a poem—evidently as a bid for her opinion.

"Yes, indeed it would," retorted Mrs. C—— with spirit. "And you're just the one to write it. Why don't you?"

Mr. Whittier disappeared into his room again. And we have "The Mantle of St. John de Matha."



The poet had the happy faculty of making people feel at ease, and so of bringing out their best. By recognizing the possibilities he saw—and these he was always quick to see—he helped to turn them into realities. Not seldom did it come about that a man left his presence feeling himself a more worthy fellow than he had gone into it. And oftentimes, no doubt, he was.

Whittier's influence over young people was not due wholly to that in his character which commanded their admiration, or even to his fun and power of repartee. It came largely from his sympathy with them, his ability to see things from their point of view. There were times when peculiar exhibitions of character roused him to keen comment. It was not in his own town, but in Boston itself, that he had the novel experience of not being recognized. One day he was talking to two ladies at the Winthrop House. A young woman just out of boarding-school, who had come to pay a visit to the ladies, was introduced to the poet; but she was far from comprehending the honor done her, and it was impossible to enlighten her in his presence.

"Whittier!" she repeated, with an elaborateness of patronage, adding that his name reminded her that at school they had just been reading "Snow-bound" by the poet Whittier. It was so beautiful, so fine! And she gushed inanely in its praise. Had he read it?

The poet admitted that he had "looked it over."

And he admired it, of course? But to her mind assent to that question went without saying; and she next asked Mr. Whittier if he were any relative of the poet.

He had not studied out what relation, he answered her.

"And have you ever seen the poet Whittier?" she propounded, promptly.

The poet admitted that he thought he had met him.

The young woman's further personal questions are not recorded; but for some time she talked on, happy in the sound of her own voice, and patronized both poem and poet—to say nothing of the unknown who bore his name!

When she had gone, Whittier looked after her with a quizzical expression, and remarked that he always pitied such young women.

One day the poet's doctor said to him: "You have written so much, Mr. Whittier, that I suppose that now you write without labor, that it is easy to you?"

"No," returned the latter emphatically; "everything is labor to me. I don't know any *easy* writing."

No one realized better than Whittier the difference between the appearance of a poem in manuscript and the same in print. So when he was writing a poem he would say to a young neighbor—a printer—who lived across the way: "Fred, I want to see thee a minute." Then he would hand the man the poem, or a portion of it, to put into type, so that before sending it to the publishers he might judge for himself how it would look in print.

But there was one time, at least, when he waited for no such self-criticism; when the spirit moved him so strongly that it swept away all but the emotion it kindled in his heart; when it was "easy writing" for him so far as the flowing of his pen was concerned, for it could not go fast enough to keep pace with the flow of his thoughts—although, no doubt, he paid by days of headache for the all but involuntary toil of his spirit. This was when he wrote "*Laus Deo*," his pæan for the passage of the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery. He came home from the Fifth Day meeting of the Friends with eyes large and glowing with excitement; and while the bells were yet ringing their joy, he passed into his garden room and to his desk. His housekeeper, the Scotswoman, heard no walking back and forth that day, as she had often heard while the poet was at his work.



Many persons must have unconsciously given the poet suggestions for poems. But his verses called "The Captain's Well" were written to right a neglect brought forcibly to his notice by his friend and neighbor, Mrs. M——; although at the time she did not know how well she was building. She sat one evening in the garden room, making her complaint of a misuse, or, rather, of a disuse, of something over which the members of the Improvement Society of the town, who were busy looking up its antiquities, were wrathful.

"I should think the old captain would come out of his grave, Mr. Whittier," she cried indignantly, "to see his old well, which he dug for the free use of the public, covered with rubbish in this way!"

And she went on to free her mind still more fully concerning public rights and private neglect of these as illustrated in the case of the old well dug by Valentine Bagley for the wayfarer, so that none who passed by might endure a tithe of the agony of thirst that he himself had known when lost in the desert.

The poet was deeply interested. "Yes," he answered her; "it ought to be opened;" and in a moment he added: "We will have it opened."

The word of the poet proved as effective as a king's mandate; for in his poem he told the true story of Valentine Bagley, an old-time worthy of Amesbury; of his shipwreck, his desert wanderings, and his resolve to save others at least one of his many sufferings, a resolve which he executed with his own hands by digging his well. Whittier's poem not only brought about the rehabilitation of the old well, but the thousand dollars which the New York *Ledger* paid him for the poem went to serve some noble purpose.



To a child of ten years, whose home was on the shore of the beautiful Merrimac, and who one day had shyly left her tribute of loving reverence for him at his door, the poet wrote:

John G. Whittier is greatly indebted to his young friend, Grace M——, for her beautiful gift of flowers. It is doubly welcome at this inclement season; and she has his thanks and best wishes.

Amesbury, 3rd mo. 29, 1883.

Of all the birds, the poet in his letters speaks most of the bluebird, that messenger of spring. "The winter has been rather hard on me," he wrote from Oak Knoll, the home of relatives whom he often visited after the marriage of his niece to Mr. Pickard, his biographer, "and I have suffered from the inability to get out of doors much. I shall be glad to hear the bluebirds." At another time: "The bluebirds are singing in our pines." And again: "The bad weather has made me ill, and I shall not try Boston again until the bluebirds come." Over and over, the poet, to whom the winters were so hard, wrote and spoke of these songsters whose notes promised warmer sunshine.

The following extracts from letters to the writer give characteristic touches of Whittier. In the December of 1881 he wrote:

I have been ill a good deal of the past month, and in addition, I suffer from lameness. I begin to suspect that I am growing old in earnest. . . . I have not been in Boston for nearly a year, and have hardly courage to attempt it. Did any of you hear Archdeacon Farrar? He and Phillips Brooks came to see me, and I was much pleased with him.

And the same year he wrote:

I have passed a quiet birthday on the seventeenth. It is always a serious matter—passing these milestones of life. At my age I cannot

look forward to many more. I send thee a copy of what is called my birthday book. It does not amount to much—mere shreds and patches; but it is pretty so far as the publishers are concerned.

At another time, with that wonderful modesty of his in the face of such adulation as few men have received, he wrote:

Of course I shall send thee the small volume of poems ["Saint Gregory's Guest"] as soon as it is printed. It is a poor affair, I fear, but if it was a mistake, it is not likely to be repeated. I only wanted to speak to my old friends once more.

I suppose we all need to feel our weakness and dependence upon our Father [he wrote in answer to a question], and that it is well for us to find ourselves sometimes walking the Valley of Humiliation; but I like the hills and the sunshine, after all.

And the hills and the sunshine of joy were what he liked to lead others to when he could.

Not long before his death he wrote from Amesbury:

I have been unable to write for some weeks, except at rare intervals, as my eyes are failing me, and my general health and strength are so diminished. I never expect to write again, except an occasional note in private correspondence. The mental effort of dictation which I have tried is too hard for me. Phebe [the adopted daughter of one of his cousins at Oak Knoll] has tried to be my amanuensis, but to little purpose. I can only read for a few minutes without pain. . . . My work is over—I can do no more, but must silently wait for the end, which cannot be far off. Letter after letter meanwhile comes to me which I cannot answer, and people come to see me whom I cannot talk with.

Yet he rallied his strength. For it was after this letter that the last beautiful message of his poems, "At Sundown," printed but not published at that time, was sent out by him in greeting to his friends.

Whatever his weakness and weariness of body, the soul in him was that shining light that shone more and more unto the perfect day. In a long conversation which the writer held with him at the home of his cousins, Mr. and Mrs. Cartland, after his recovery from "grippe," with which he had been dangerously ill, he seemed in clearness of vision, wideness of range, strength of grasp of subject, and especially in a certain energy, to carry one back to his years of comparative bodily vigor. All that his soul had had or held, it had or held more firmly than ever; and it had gained that higher outlook given to the eyes of him whose feet are upon the mountains.

Not only did Whittier believe in immortality; but his very presence helped others to believe in it.

"THE SPIRIT OF YOU"

BY ALFRED DAMON RUNYON

MCSWEAL, of the Battery, private; and a wound that he could n't survive.
("Press hard on the blood-flow, doctor; we 'll try to keep him alive.")

McSweal, of the Battery, speaking—to a locket set turquoise blue—
"No chaplain to see me departing? Well, I 'll pray to the Spirit of You.

"I 've groped as a child in the darkness, when it feels for its mother's breast;

I 've cried for a nameless something, and sought for a lighter rest;
I 've listened in blackest silence in hope of a voice I knew,
And I turn from a hopeless praying to pray to the Spirit of You.

"'T is an old, old, helpless longing that quickens the stagnant veins;
'T is a world-old crying for something that rouses the hidden pains;
'T is a hopeless searching for surcease—I 've called on the gods that are true,
And now I recall my religion—but turn to the Spirit of You.

"There's a violet scent in my nostrils; there's a violet breath on my cheek;

I'm seeking no thin-worded parting—well knowing you never would speak.

Now the moments that waited run swiftly—aye, time was the friend I knew;

And he's brought me at last to my altar—to pray to the Spirit of You.

"I 've cursed in my moments of passion; besought with a heart contrite;
But never an answer to praying—though I'm having it answered to-night.

"'T is an old, old, cold, old longing—'t is a dreaming that never came true—

But the blessing of Faith comes to me as I pray to the Spirit of You."

We laid him out there as he wanted—McSweal, of the Battery, dead;
With a blanket of perfumed blossoms, and the guidon under his head;
With the locket still clasped in his fingers—we gave him a volley or two,

And we left him out there as he wanted—to talk with the Spirit of You!



FROM THE BASKET OF ALLAH

BY GEORGE L. KNAPP

“TWO pebbles lay together in the basket of Allah; and they jostled each other, and were wroth. Then the Most High cast out the pebbles from His basket, and they fell upon the earth, and became men. And of these two that had jostled together, one became a boatman by the cataracts of the Nile, and one a prince in Ceylon. Yet they journeyed, not knowing why; and came near to each other; and at last they met. And then they settled the quarrel which began when they were pebbles in the basket of Allah.”

Thus saith an Eastern sage; or, if he did n't, he should have said it. Now for the proof.

John Warren was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. She had been a widow ever since John could remember; and his memory went pretty well back. She was a woman of Ideas—the kind you spell with a capital. She read Browning—she even claimed to understand him. She belonged to societies formed for the better Understanding of the Purpose of the Universe, and the Ultimate Nature of Mind. Also, Mrs. Warren belonged to a Peace Society, which had apparently been organized for the purpose of swearing politely at other people's sins. So far there is nothing extraordinary about her—she was raised in Boston—but the trouble was, she was consistent. She trained up John in the way he should go—as she understood it. She made the poor cub read Browning; and quizzed him on the symbolic nature of Caliban and Setebos, and the meaning of the various queer things that Pippa passed up. She expounded to him the Hidden Thought of Things; till he got the creeps, and would n't go up to bed alone for fear the astral body of a bad word might come out of

some dark corner and grab him. But especially and particularly did Mrs. Warren teach her boy the evils of strife, and the glories of non-resistance.

"You must never fight; never, never, never! It is wrong, it is the most horrible thing in the world. Think how sad the loving Creator must feel to see one of His images engaged in defacing another!" (Mrs. Warren was on excellent terms with the Deity, and felt quite competent to express His sentiments on any subject.) "You must overcome violence with love. You must live in the world an example of the patient might of true Christian charity."

Bud Noble was the son of his mother; and might have been the only one but for the interference of five others. His mother was a widow, too; but she did not reach that estate until Bud was fifteen years old, and could remember all about it. Bud's father held that among the sacred and inalienable rights guaranteed to him by the Constitution of the United States and the ordinance of baptism, was the right to make moonshine whiskey. Certain meddlesome persons in the service of Uncle Sam took a different view of the case; and these conflicting opinions sometimes led to arguments. At the close of one of these joint debates, the elder Noble died very suddenly—of lead poisoning, perhaps, for there was enough of that metal in him to poison a dozen men. Two of the revenue officers succumbed to the same malady about the same time, and another had a slight attack, but recovered. This might have been a coincidence, but Bud's mother did not think so. She was very much like John's mother—in some ways. She did not belong to societies with Sanscrit names, and she spoke of "ha'n'ts" instead of "astral bodies" when referring to apparitions from another world, but she had the same vice of consistency. She brought up Bud in the way he should go—as she understood it.

"Yeh must git the revenooer thet killed yore pore pappy. Hit's yore duty, an' ye've got hit to do. I'll see thet yeh know where to ketch him. Shoot him through the belly, so he'll be a week a dyin', an' remember every minit what hit was done for!"

And these two pebbles from the basket of Allah came together on the plains of Arizona.

Their meeting was in this wise. When Bud was about twenty, he tried to get the revenuer; and thought for a few hours that he had succeeded. But his aim was not quite true, or the bullet glanced, or some other chance intervened; and so it happened that a badly wounded man was able to tell his belated companions just what sort of chap had done the shooting. Bud left for the West the next night. A few years later John found that his researches in transcendental psychology had weakened his health, and was told that the dry air of the Western plains was the right place to get well in. When he got to the Bar X

ranch, there was Bud, ready and waiting for him. It was characteristic that Bud had secured his job by riding the worst outlaw bronco on the ranch; and that John was given some sort of position through the influence of a friend who owned a share in the cattle company.

Old man Benson, who stayed while foremen came and went, and made things go through sheer kindly nature—old man Benson met John at the station, and looked with dismay at his make-up. It was English, of the most offensive outing sort. When they camped that night the old man spoke:

"If you'll take a fool's advice, Mr. Warren, you'll shed them outing duds, and get into 'most anything else you have handy. You see, the boys get kind o' lonesome out to the ranches, and they like a chance to guy somebody. And I don't mind saying that in them clothes you'd suit 'em proper."

But the only other clothes John had with him were even worse from a Western point of view. So it came to pass that he entered the scene of his trials, clad in his English duds.

The boys at the bunk-house looked him over. Most of them said nothing, beyond a rather stiff greeting. A few made good natured remarks about cutting eye-teeth. Then Bud came in. He looked Warren up and down like the villain in the melodrama, and then turned to Benson.

"Where 'n hell did yeh pick hit up?" he queried.

The men laughed, and John flushed painfully. Old man Benson rose.

"Mr. Noble, this is Mr. Warren," he said gravely. "You'll be calling each other Bud and John in a few days, so you might as well begin it now. John's new to the West, Bud, and I want you to look after him a little."

"What the hell do yeh take me fur?" said Bud. "I ain't no wet nurse. Say, kid, got yer bottle along?"

"Yes," said John, misunderstanding the question. He dived into his suit-case, and came up with a small pocket flask, in a leather case with silver ornaments. Bud backed away with his hands in the air. The men roared.

"Holy rattlesnakes! stranger, what's that? Does hit bite?" He reached out a hand timidly, and, after several false starts, seized the flask. He uncorked it and snuffed. "Say, kiddie, don't yeh know yeh ort n't to put lickin' in yer milk? Yer mammy won't like hit." He swallowed the contents at a gulp. "Still, hit ain't so very strong," he admitted. "But don't try hit again, sonny. I'll rope a cow fer yeh to-morrow."

That was the first evening—in part. The second was like unto it, only more so. And the third bore a similar relation to the second.

Old man Benson took Bud aside the day after John's arrival and pleaded for mercy for the New Englander. It was useless, of course. At last he tired of coaxing.

"Well, there's one thing I want ye to bear in mind," said the old man. "Don't you go to saying things to him that he's *got* to take up, an' then get out your shootin' iron. If you do, you'll have me to reckon with, that's all."

"What do yeh mean?" asked Bud. There was a well defined tradition that old man Benson could shoot with disagreeable accuracy.

"I mean sayin' things about his mother, and so on. You know."

"Oh, that's all right," said Bud. "I ain't after his mother. Hit's him I'm 'lowin' to have the fun with. But yeh need n't think I'm skeered of yeh."

But John did not understand his mercies. To his mind, things were about as bad as they could be. He had never dreamed of such bedevilment as he had now to face. By day he was out on the range, where things were comparatively peaceful; for though the others sometimes chaffed him a little, their efforts were tame and spiritless compared to those of Bud. But the evenings at the bunk-house were simply maddening.

I wish I could quote you some of Bud's remarks, without expurgation. Then you would not wonder that John felt his Christian training slipping away from him, and glimpsed the primitive savage peeking through the holes in the fast thinning mantle of civilization. You would understand how it was that he lay awake nights, thinking thoughts whose mildest expression would have shocked his mother into nervous prostration; and wishing he could stamp the life out of this mocking devil who seemed bent on driving him mad. But Bud's conversation on paper is a thing of dots and dashes; and these are no great help to understanding. Still—

"Hit must have been mighty onbarassin' figgerin' out what kind of clothes to put you into when yeh was a kid. . . . The puzzle yeh 'd be if yeh was caught with them duds off is jest painful to think about. . . . There ain't nothin' about yeh thet looks like a man, 'ceptin' thet mustache—an' I reckon thet's the work of some of these Boston hair restorers. Tell yeh what, though: ef yeh'd shave thet thing off, yeh'd make a mighty purty girl. Say, did n't the boys never call yeh 'Sissy'?"

They had; and the guilty remembrance made John blush. Bud whooped.

"I knowed hit! I knowed hit! Jennie—thet's what yer name orter be! Jennie! Purty Jennie!"

Why did John not resent this ceaseless nagging? Why did he not assert himself like a man? That's what I have been trying to tell

you. He had been drilled in the belief that all violence, even in self defence, was utterly evil; and if his impulses did not square with his training, that is because it takes more than one generation to breed a perfect fool. On the other hand, Bud came of a stock and had received a training which recognized fighting superiority as the one badge of honor, and he acted accordingly. Or, to give an illustration:

"How can I help fighting when Theodore Winthrop calls me names?" asked John, away back when he was young enough to be a boy, and was being trained for a stained-glass angel instead.

"Come away, and leave him to the still, small voice of conscience," said John's mother. "And pray for him, that he may learn the beauties of a gentle spirit."

"How am I goin' to get that revenooer?" asked Bud, not quite so far back. "He's a heap bigger 'n me; an' he kin shoot."

"Lay fer him in the bresh, an' git him when he goes by," said Bud's mother. And she actually prayed that it might happen that way.

Perhaps the bitterest drop in John's cup of wormwood was that he could not help admiring his tormentor. Handsome, bubbling over with life, brave without thinking about it, honest, according to his not very brilliant lights, Bud exercised a fascination on John. The two men were complements. John had never known struggle and victory; and while this experience was lacking he could never feel sure whether he was a real man or a counterfeit. Bud had never known defeat and pain; and until these were brought home to him, he could never know his own limitations, and have mercy on the limitations of others. They could have told each other a world of things; only, the things a man can be told are the things he half knows already. The pebbles from the basket of Allah had to learn each other's quality by the simple test of friction. There was no other way.

If Bud had been an ethnologist or a student of history, he would have paused in the persecution he enjoyed so hugely. A man in whose veins flows the mingled blood of Puritan and Huguenot, dashed with a bit of Scotch Covenanter, *may* be a coward. But I should n't like to bet on it, especially when he has steel blue eyes. But if Bud had been a student of any sort he would not have been Bud. He could not even read the lesson of an occurrence that opened old man Benson's eyes, after first nearly closing them forever. A new Hereford bull had been brought to the ranch, and, instead of being turned out with the herd, was kept for some weeks in the corral. One morning when old man Benson went in to feed the brute, he found himself suddenly knocked down, and in imminent danger of being torn to pieces. John heard the cries for help, and came running. He had no gun, but he snatched a pitchfork and whipped the bull to a standstill, and old man Benson dragged himself out, bruised and shaken, but not otherwise

injured. As in a dream, he watched John Warren drive the bull into a corner, take him by the ring in his nose, and tie him up. That evening the old man sought Bud, and tried to tell him things.

"You want to let that boy alone," he concluded. "You've plagued him enough. He's no coward. Some of these fine days he'll wake up; and when he does you're going to get hurt."

"Hurt!" said Bud. If this paper were asbestos, I might tell you what else he said. As it is, I must be content with intimating that he described John as utterly deficient in sense, courage, and reputable ancestry; and named a large variety of evil things that might be done to him without the slightest danger of reprisals. Benson shook his head.

"All right," he said. "Have it your own way. But when the cyclone strikes, don't say I didn't warn you."

A week passed, in which John seemed to live in a brown study, and then he surprised Benson again. The company had a range extending up into the hills, and there, a dozen miles or more from the main place, was a cabin and corral where two or three men were stationed most of the time. John asked to be transferred to this station. Benson, who happened to be in charge just then, objected at once.

"Don't do it, John," he said. "The boys'll think you've got cold feet, and cleared out; an' that'll make things worse'n ever. If you'd go after Bud the way you did after that bull, you would n't have no trouble. But if you don't want to do that, stay anyhow. I'll make Bud behave himself, some way."

"It does n't matter what the men think," said John. "They'll change their minds after a while. I want three months up there, with none of these chaps around; and then I'm coming back. And I'd like three days off to go to town, if you please; and I wish you would tell me something about guns. I want to get one."

"Hum!" said the old man thoughtfully. "That's the way the land lays, is it? All right, you can go. But let me tell you, my boy, keep clear of the shooting game as long as you can. The only time it pays is when you can't help it." He added the desired information.

"I told yeh he was a coward," said Bud, when he came in that night and found his victim gone.

"He's not a coward," said the old man. "And if you don't believe me now, you will when the smash comes—if you live long enough to have opinions."

If Bud could have looked across to the little station in the hills, his faith in the old man's judgment might have been strengthened. John had bought a couple of revolvers, and "ammunition enough fer an Injin campaign," as one of his new companions put it. As soon as he reached his new quarters he began practising. First he shot at a

target blazed on a tree, using a good sized mark, and taking careful aim; next he lessened the size of his mark, and began to shoot more quickly; then he varied things by shooting from the hip, or standing with his back to the mark, wheeling, and firing.

"I don't know who it is that feller means to get," said one of the men—he who had marvelled at the supply of cartridges; "but I'm bettin' something he'll get him."

The pebbles from the basket of Allah were getting close to their final accounting. The three months were nearly up when one Sunday the Englishman proposed a visit to the main ranch. John accepted; and when he swung from the saddle in front of the bunk-house, he felt that the test of his fitness to survive was at hand. He was reaching out for a cigar tendered by the old man Benson when Bud appeared. He took the stogie almost out of John's fingers, and with the remark, "Girls should n't smoke, Jennie," raised it to his own lips.

There were half a dozen men looking straight at these two, yet I doubt if one of them actually saw the blow struck. They knew that a blow had passed, however, for they heard the click, saw Bud's head snap back like a mechanical toy, and his body measure its length on the grass. It was a case of motion quicker than sight, and John happened to be standing in a position that made a good right-hander easy. It was an upper-cut, however; and the effect of an upper-cut soon passes. By the time the onlookers had caught their breath, Bud was reaching toward his hip.

"Touch that gun and I'll make you eat it!" The gun was not touched. John stooped, jerked it from its case, and handed it to Benson. Then he turned back to Bud.

"Get up!" he said. Bud did not move. John repeated his order, and backed it with a kick. Bud left the ground like a bundle of steel springs; and stopped, poised on his toes, looking into the muzzle of John's revolver.

"I—I'll kill yeh!" Bud's chest was heaving as from a race, and his voice was the flat, grating scream of one of the giant cats.

"You'll have a chance to try!" John said grimly. "But it'll be done in the open. There won't be any sneaking up in the brush. A couple of you fellows measure off the ground for a shooting match." He nodded to the Englishman.

Old man Benson started to interfere; looked at Bud, then at John; and stepped back without speaking. There was plainly but the one way to unravel this tangle. The men consulted together for a few minutes, and then two of them proceeded to measure off the ground. They made it ten paces; and when the marks were set, the fighters placed, and Bud had received his gun, one of the cowboys spoke:

"This feller"—indicating the Englishman—"will count three, an' when he says, 'Three!' yeh can begin work an' keep it up as long as yer ammunition holds out. If either of yeh tries to shoot before the word, I'll plug him!" He was holding his gun as he spoke.

"One! Two! Three!" There was the merest fraction of a second between the reports; but John's bullet went through Bud's arm, and the mountain boy fired wild, dropping his gun. Snarling like a panther, he snatched at the revolver with his left hand; but another bullet struck the weapon, knocking it back. And then the gun in John's hand was levelled straight at Bud's forehead, and John's voice—though assuredly John's mother would never have recognized it—said: "Beg!"

Bud's face was pale, and in his eyes was the look that comes when fear at last is face to face with courage. The blood was dripping from his arm. His left hand clinched helplessly, and he grated his teeth.

"Beg, if you want to live!" John repeated; and a bullet that almost touched Bud's ear lent force to the order. Bud winced; and John laughed. The gun barrel settled into line again, and the eye behind it looked more cold and menacing than the hollow steel. "Beg!" said John, for the third time. The mountain lad threw back his head, and with a sweeping gesture tore open his shirt.

"Shoot! yeh snivellin' Yankee puke, yeh; shoot! Yeh've got me, an' yeh can kill me, but I'll see yeh in hell before I'll beg! Shoot!"

And as John tossed his revolver aside and walked forward with outstretched hand, Bud collapsed on the grass.

Two pebbles jostled together in the basket of Allah, and bitter was the strife between them. Yea, though they became men, they journeyed, not knowing why, from the ends of the earth, that they might settle their quarrel. And they met, and strove together till blood did flow; and behold! it was the blood of brothers. For they were of the one kind and making, that were pebbles in the basket of Allah.



WHO UNDERSTANDS !

BY ELSIE CASSEIGNE KING

NOT to the man whom Victory crowns should fall
 The glory of high fame in many lands.
 The laurel wreath should rest on his white brow,
 Who through all troubled human speech, and woe
 Of heart, and fear of fate, just understands!

THE PENDULUM SWINGS

By William Hamilton Osborne

JIMMY BURNS, of Wall Street, toiled up three flights of stairs to reach his little Harlem flat. Many and many a time he had fervently, passionately desired a home with an elevator; many and many a time his steps had lagged, his feet had dragged, under the stress of a dull day down-town. But to-night he forgot, almost, that he was climbing stairs; to him it seemed as though he flew. Perhaps the cold, snappy ozone of the winter air was in his blood; the spirit of the holiday crowds without may have entered into his soul. He knew, though.

"At last," he laughed aloud, in glee. At his touch, almost, the door of his little fourth-floor flat opened, and Mrs. Jimmy Burns stretched forth her arms and stood on her tiptoes and kissed him many times. Jimmy caught her by the arm and pulled her into the little dining-room.

"Tired, Jimmy?" she queried. But Jimmy only smiled.

"At last," he repeated with significance. He leaned over and pulled Mrs. Jimmy by the hair. "What about Christmas, girlie?" he queried. "Here it's the eighteenth, and we have n't said—boo!"

"Well—" she began. And it was then that Jimmy sprung his *coup d'état*. He did it with deliberation, with ostentation. He drew from his pocket a small, flat, square book and passed it over. Then he drew another of the same kind from another pocket and passed *that* over, too. Mrs. Jimmy looked at each, and then she laughed.

"At last," she repeated after Jimmy Burns. "Think of it, Jimmy. Seventeen hundred in the Seamen's, and eighteen hundred in the Emigrant. Jimmy—Jimmy boy!"

"Well," returned Jimmy, with glowing eyes, "it is n't much of a surprise, is it? You knew . . . ?"

"I knew," she answered, "that it was coming. Only I did n't expect that we could save so much so soon."

"Thirty-five hundred," mused Jimmy, rolling the words deliciously about his tongue, "and Christmas is coming, and—and——"

"Not that little house in Forest Hill, Jimmy?"

"Um," grinned Jimmy, kissing her. "Stuccoed."

"That dream in half-timbers?" queried she.

"Fifty by a hundred," murmured her husband; "street paved, curbed, sewerred, flagged, gassed, electric-lighted . . . um . . . um . . . Thirty-five hundred down, balance on building loan mortgage, just the same as rent, only samer." He leaned back in his chair. "Think of it, girlie!" he cried. "Jove! I can hardly breathe in this confounded flat. I——"

"And," she concluded, "it's to be *my* Christmas present from Jimmy Burns."

"And mine from you," he answered. They forgot supper that night. They sat there side by side, drinking in the glory of it all. They had been married five years now; and they had saved. They had sacrificed the present for the sake of the future; and the future had arrived.

They were just ordinary New York people, these two. They had met in a terribly usual way. Jimmy Burns had been confidential clerk at one time for Marchbank, Moore & Co., of the Street; and Mrs. Jimmy Burns—Miss Janet Steele of five years before—had been Marchbank, Moore & Co.'s stenographer. And Jimmy had been a marrying young man, and Mrs. Jimmy had been a marrying young woman. And there you are! Dear me! These things are *so* simple, after all.

Jimmy was a broker—one of the legitimate kind. He made a living at it. Now and then he took a little flyer on the side, when it was good and *safe*. Of course he was not a member of the Stock Exchange—seats there cost ninety thousand dollars, and few there be who own them. Marchbank, Moore & Co. were his dealers on 'Change. And Jimmy was working out his own salvation just as all the small lawyers, doctors, real-estate men, insurance brokers, and independent dealers do. He dressed well, and so did his young wife. And people who never had been inside the little Harlem flat would tell you confidentially that Jimmy Burns was making well up to ten thousand a year. He was making, possibly, one-fourth of that.

Jimmy wanted to be rich; he wanted to be comfortable; he wanted Janet to live in luxury.

"This is the first evidence of it, Janet girl," he told her—"this Christmas present of that house in Forest Hill."

Next morning Jimmy sallied out with new vigor in his veins, new strength within him. He would be rich—rich. It was bound to come in time.

Now, it so happened that Jimmy Burns was not the only man who wanted to get rich. There were a few more down on the Street. Some of them wanted to get rich by honest means; others just wanted to get rich. Some wanted millions; some thousands; some wanted a square meal.

"Thirty-five hundred," mused Jimmy, "for Christmas. I wish I had ten thousand."

Every day in Wall Street a new idea is born. There was a man named Shifty Shift on Wall Street, or rather under it, who was in the business of turning out new ideas. Shifty Shift was his real name, so they say; but he was known as Peter W. Mackintosh. He was portly; he was gruff, and bluff, and of few words.

Peter W. Mackintosh drifted that morning into the office of James Burns, small stock-broker. He produced letters of introduction by the dozen. For Shifty Shift, alias P. W. Mackintosh, had learned early in the game that while money is hard to get, letters of introduction come easy—sometimes almost without solicitation. And the game of Shifty Shift—so old now, but so very new then. And he was trying it on the dog—on Jimmy Burns.

He passed over the morning issue of a well known New York daily. In the corner of a sheet was a little advertisement:

The Placer & Nugget Gold Mining Co. will buy its own outstanding stock at 65. None for sale. Address Secretary of the Co., Rooms 810-11, Wall Street Syndicate Building. Or, call, if preferable.

It was such a small, insignificant advertisement that perhaps no one ever read it save Shifty Shift; but that small advertisement was the first overt act in the pioneer game called the game of the "sick engineer." Jimmy Burns looked the little advertisement over; looked big P. W. Mackintosh over; and puffed on his cigar.

"Well?" he queried.

"Well," returned Shifty Shift, "this stock was n't worth five a year ago. They must have struck it rich, and——"

"Well," said Jimmy, "they don't want to sell. They want to buy."

"Precisely," answered Shifty Shift, "and they're mighty slick about it. They won't say a word. They've struck a vein, or they would n't want to buy up the control. You see?"

"I have n't any to sell," Jimmy protested.

"Nor I," answered the shifty stranger, "but—listen." And then he launched forth into the story of the engineer who had taken stock of the mine for his services, who did n't know its worth, who had a slice of it, and who would take ten for it and be glad of the chance, and who—save the mark!—was ill in squalid lodgings over on Third Avenue.

"If we can buy that stock at ten," quoth Shifty Shift, "of this miserable cuss, he'll be tickled to death, and—then we'll sell it to the company at sixty-five. How so?"

Jimmy Burns gasped. Poor chap! could he be blamed? Remember this was the *first* "sick engineer" game. And Jimmy wanted to get

rich. Perhaps, had he thought for a few moments, he would have had some qualms of conscience for the sick engineer; but Jimmy had never had time to think. Wall Street had ever been a game of the survival of the fittest.

He investigated. He called on "Secretary" at 810-11, Wall Street Syndicate Building—a dingy man in two dingy offices. The secretary was suspicious of Jimmy—wary, alert, afraid. He would give no information. All he would say was that the concern would pay sixty-five for all the stock it could get. No, it would n't pay seventy. Come, now, if you've got stock, why, say so. No nonsense.

The rest is a matter of police court records. Jimmy Burns went to the "sick engineer," bought all the stock he had at twelve and a half. It took his pile, for the "sick engineer" just happened to have as much stock as Jimmy had money. Jimmy's thirty-five hundred went by the board. But what of it? Down in 810-11, Wall Street Syndicate Building, was the mining company who would pay Jimmy Burns five times thirty-five hundred for the stock. He hastened down there with his purchase.

He found Rooms 810-11, Wall Street Syndicate Building. That is all he found. They were unoccupied—horribly unoccupied. There was no secretary, no mining company. There was vacancy and nothing else.

"Stung!" cried Jimmy, gnashing his teeth. He went back to his office, and when he realized for the first time what it all meant he broke down and cried like a child. He did n't—could n't—tell Janet until the day before Christmas.

"We were to have *such* a Christmas," he wailed, "such a home! And now——"

They did n't have any Christmas. There were others, though, who did. Shifty Shift, for instance; and the secretary of the mining company. And the sick engineer—dear me! he had so much Christmas that it really made him sick.

"Thirty-five hundred dollars," they told each other. "Such a Christmas! It's like taking candy from a baby."

But during the holidays the baby grew. Jimmy Burns had determined to hit back. And in lieu of buying a cozy little half-timbered house, he spent his time in some detective work. And he caught the three—together. They were locked up. Then, for the first time, the public heard of the wonderful new game of the sick engineer and of the corporation who had nothing to sell, but everything to buy. Jimmy was mad clear through. It did n't matter so much to him that people would laugh at him. He wanted to get back at Shifty Shift—Shifty and his gang.

Janet went with him to the Criminal Court Building, when the

three were tried. She wanted to see it all. She wanted to be present when the three were convicted. She knew they would be convicted.

"For they've got our house—our home," she told herself. She sat back among the spectators in sessions and looked on.

Jimmy testified. His testimony was effective. The three *were* convicted. Later they were sentenced.

"This don't get us our money," Jimmy told Mrs. Jimmy, as they walked out on the street, through the crowd, "but——"

He never finished the sentence. Suddenly, out of the crowd, there was impelled with terrific force a clenched hand and an arm of iron. It struck but once—that was enough. In another instant Jimmy Burns had landed headlong against the sharp edges of three of the court-house steps—unconscious; down and out.

The man who did the hitting disappeared. He has never been found. But that man was the embodiment of vengeance—of the vengeance of Shifty Shift. Jimmy Burns had hit back at Shifty Shift. Shifty Shift, through some myrmidon, had returned the compliment. That's all.

All—except that Janet Burns, the young wife, found that the loss of the thirty-five hundred dollars, and of the Christmas home it would have bought, was the least of the ills that had come upon them.

"Jimmy boy," she wailed, "my Jimmy boy!" For Jimmy Burns was truly down and out. The sharp steps had proven worse than the clenched fist. Jimmy Burns had become, suddenly, a young man with a fractured hip.

"I've been a fool—a fool," he wailed, when, in his helplessness, he realized it all. "I've been worse—I've been a knave. If I had n't been so greedy, so ready to—to take advantage of another man's misfortune——"

They both smiled. "To take advantage," said Janet, "of the poor sick engineer." They even laughed. But Jimmy, as he lay there day after day told himself that he was right; that he *had* been a knave more than once—just because it was a part of the Street. "Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost"—it was the motto of the Street; one that had seemed good to him once. It seemed horrible now. He had never had time to think before—especially about the right and wrong of things. He had been honest—yes, he had been fair. But in the hurly-burly his finer sensibilities had been blunted. He was down and out; physically flat on his back. But he was seeing things clearer, after all.

"When I get back on the Street," he told himself.

But Janet knew that he was n't going back on the Street—on *any* street. She knew that Jimmy's days of activity were over. Yet she had had hopes. These narrowed down to just one hope.

"There's only one man who can put him on his feet," her doctor told her helplessly. "It's Schwarzwaelder of Berlin. It'll cost you a couple of thousand, though, and the trip over."

At first she tried to raise the couple of thousand; but she had no people, and Jimmy had none. She went to Moore of Marchbank, Moore & Co.; but she knew Moore—she knew there was no chance of getting good money out of Moore without good security. He was business personified, was Moore of Marchbank, Moore & Co.

And, besides, *they must live*. This, it must be confessed, did not bother her so much. She was a business woman; she could take a job as stenographer somewhere—she was a good stenographer. She could earn a living for herself and for Jimmy. But she wanted to do more than that. She knew that, as time went on, Jimmy would suffer untold mental agonies because *she* was doing it all. She wanted Jimmy to be cured.

Suddenly an idea occurred to her. She broached it to Jimmy. Jimmy thought it would do.

She saw Moore of Marchbank, Moore & Co. Sure, said Moore; he would help her. She had known that he would, if it did n't cost him money.

A month later she opened a small office on Forty-fourth Street. It was the office of J. Steele & Co., stock-brokers, dealers in stocks and bonds.

"There ought to be a chance," she told herself. She knew the business—Marchbank, Moore & Co.'s had been a good school. She knew well enough that there were a hundred women running brokerage offices; but what Janet was going to run, under her maiden name, was an office that was to be straight as a string—a genuine, honest, brokerage business. She paid a month's rent in advance; she bought rich furnishings on the instalment plan. At night she copied papers to help pay the expenses of her office.

The venture was a failure. Janet Steele Burns, of J. Steele & Co., was finding out, too late, that it takes years to build up a business of any kind. She worked hard day and night, and yet all she could do was to glean a mere subsistence for Jimmy and herself.

"Oh, well," Jimmy would comfort her, "wait till I get out."

Jimmy Burns was not the only one who waited to get out. There were three gentlemen up the river, who sang the same song. Chief among these was Shifty Shift. *His* confinement was doing *him* good. For he perceived the flaw that there was in the game of the sick engineer. Besides, all the under-world was now playing that game. Shifty had started the ball rolling; the second-rate chaps were keeping it up.

"But," Shifty whispered to his faithful two, "*next* time we do a

turn that knocks spots out of the sick engineer. Wait till we get out. Then we'll see what's what."

Shifty Shift was still a man with one idea. He was not going to vary from first principles. He understood the art of sleight of hand, which is, in effect, to hold the attention of the audience on the right hand, while the left hand executes the business. Well, they got out, finally—the triumvirate of Wall Street.

"What now?" the two asked Shifty.

"The same old game," announced Shifty.

"But," they protested, "you——"

Shifty waved his hand. "With variations," he explained. "The game is going to get well, and you won't know it when you see it."

They tried it on the dog—in Paris. Shifty Shift, in the person of Aspinwall J. Hennessy, of New York, descended upon Fournier of Paris. Fournier of Paris was a respectable little dealer of stocks and bonds, making a respectable little living.

"Buy me," said Shifty Shift, the opulent customer, "three hundred shares of Overland American, at eighty-one, through Taylor, Trimmer & Co., 334 Wall Street, New York City."

Now, Taylor, Trimmer & Co. of New York was not a firm. It was a man. In fact, it was the sick engineer.

Fournier of Paris shrugged his shoulders. "This Overland American—what should she be?"

He consulted his foreign quotations, and found Overland American to be a real stock, with a real price. *Of course* it was a real stock. Its value was represented by the figure 2. Its price—ah, its price was a different matter. For though it was worth two on the Stock Exchange in New York City, the sick engineer and his brother manipulator had been dealing wildly (with each other, and with nobody else) for a week past in this same stock; so that the purchases and sales of Overland American appeared at seventy-five and seventy-seven. Fournier saw that it was very possible to buy Overland American through Taylor, Trimmer & Co. at eighty-one.

"But," he suggested mildly, "*margin*." Aha! The curtain rolls up. The prestidigitator enters, without cuffs. He has a right hand and a left hand. Margin—margin, of course. How much? Fournier shrugs his shoulders. The transaction is a large one. The market may fluctuate. There is this and that and the other thing to be considered. Say—so much. Ten thousand francs—or more. What does Aspinwall J. Hennessy of New York care. He slaps down the margin with his right hand. His left hand? Ah, that is over in New York.

Fournier, broker, respectable, small but solid, gives his order to his go-between, who passes the respectable transaction on to his first-class brokerage concern, who gets the margin. Everything is orderly,

everything businesslike. In the next two days *somebody* in France has bought with good money three hundred shares of Overland American at eighty-one of Taylor, Trimmer & Co. *Somebody has paid for it.* It is worth two.

Fournier of Paris, and other dealers, wait patiently for Mr. Aspinwall J. Hennessy, of New York. But Mr. Hennessy never goes back. He lets the little matter of that margin go. He goes over to New York to investigate the profits of Taylor, Trimmer & Co. He finds that they bought three hundred shares of Overland American at two; and that they have sold the same at eighty-one—a fair profit of over twenty thousand dollars. The triumvirate looked one another in the eye.

"Jiminy Christmas!" they whispered. "It's like taking——"

But Shifty Shift, alias Hennessy, waved his hand. "It's the real thing," he said. "There's nothing like it. Now we'll try it on New York."

J. Steele & Co., in the person of young Mrs. Jimmy Burns, sat alone and dejected in the little Forty-fourth Street office. It was ten days before Christmas. It was three years since that—since the time they were going to buy that house. Back home a patient, gentle fellow was lying on his back, bearing the thing he had to bear. Janet was at her wits' end. She was tired. She was more than poor—she was terribly in debt. That is, terribly for her—a few hundreds. And her brokerage office was going by the board. The furniture people had given her a week to pay up arrears upon instalments; and her landlord had given her notice to vacate on January 1.

"Jimmy, Jimmy," she thought to herself, "if you only had n't——" But she did n't blame Jimmy. She loved him too much for that. And, after all, it had brought out in Jimmy's character something that had n't been there before. Jimmy had always had a heart; now he was developing a soul.

The door of J. Steele & Co.'s office opened. A portly individual entered. "I'll try it on the dog here in New York," he was whispering to himself. He looked about him, pleased and satisfied with the richness of the furniture.

"The women are easy," he assured himself. He bowed low to the woman who stood before him. He approved of her. She was well dressed. Everything seemed to be prosperous.

"Just dropped in," he commented, "from my apartment across the way, to do a little business, if you please."

He passed over his card, *Michael J. W. Murphy*—that was the name it bore. He glanced sharply at J. Steele & Co., for this man Murphy never forgot the face of a man or woman with whom he had dealt. He sighed with satisfaction. He had never dealt with J. Steele

& Co., that much was sure. He would n't have dealt with her now had he known that J. Steele & Co. was broke, and that her 'Change brokers, Marchbank, Moore & Co., had long ago grown tired of dealing for her.

"Do you deal in foreign stocks?" he queried.

She did; she dealt in everything.

"I want to buy some Inter-European—four hundred shares—in London."

"Inter-European?" she ventured. "Never heard of it." But there it was. She got out her latest quotations. It had come to the fore. It was all right, it seemed. She was quite sure that Marchbank, Moore & Co. would put *this* deal through, at any rate.

"Buy it through Maddox, Hatt & Co.," went on her customer, "at ninety-three."

"At ninety-three," she mused. Then she started. There was a gesture of this man's arm, a glance of his eye, a tone in his voice, that startled her. She had seen this man somewhere; she had heard him talk before. Who was he? Where had she seen him? Was he an old customer of Marchbank, Moore & Co.'s? Behind it all there was some sinister suggestion that accompanied her memory. *Who was he?*

"*Margin?*" It was she who was saying it.

"To be sure." Again that voice, that glance, that gesture.

And then, suddenly, she knew. But she said nothing.

"Ten per cent?" he queried.

"Make it four thousand dollars," she returned. "There may be accidents, you see."

Never for an instant did it occur to her that he would put up the money; but she did n't know the man. He knew *how* to play games. He put the money up.

Janet Burns ran home, laughing hysterically all the way.

"And," she cried to herself, "it's only ten days before Christmas!"

She said nothing to Jimmy about it; but next day she hired a burly individual who once had beaten carpets and laid them for her, and took him to her office.

"You're to stay right here," she said, "and wait."

A week passed. Then the office door opened, and Michael J. W. Murphy entered—an angry Murphy. He looked about him. The carpet-beater was kept out of sight. Mr. Murphy blustered.

"You never bought that stock," he said.

J. Steele & Co. smiled. "Inter-European?" she queried softly.

He drew forth a cablegram. "This is from Maddox, Hatt & Co.," he yelled, "and they've never had your order."

"Um," answered J. Steele & Co. "But you don't understand. Inter-European has gone down to one in London—where it's always been, and—I'm so sorry to say it—your margin is exhausted."

"What?" he cried. "Have I been swindled?"

She shook her head. "I needed the money so much—for Christmas presents; that's all."

He advanced one step. "I'll see about this," he said.

"Do," she answered. "Take it into the civil courts or the criminal courts. Take it into sessions, Mr.—Mr.—Mackintosh."

Shifty Shift jumped at the name. Then—for he was an all-round criminal—he advanced upon the woman, and placed one hand upon her throat.

Biff! *Bang!* It was the trusty carpet-beater. "You will, will you?" he said. And Shifty Shift found that a man who beats carpets is a bit—just a bit—in better shape than he who beats gulls. Within two seconds he was in the street, and the carpet-beater was waving wildly to a policeman. But Shifty Shift never waited. He ran. He may be running yet.

That was last Christmas. And the Jimmy Burnses spent it on an ocean liner, bound for Berlin.

"With four thousand dollars," murmured Janet—"our own, and simple interest upon it."

They saw Schwarzwaelder—another sleight-of-hand man of a very different kind. He laid his muscular hands upon Jimmy Burns; he made him whole.

They came back. It all took time; it took some money. But now—they're out in Forest Hill, in a cottage; not stucco, not half-timbered, but still—home. Jimmy Burns has gone back to business once again. The holidays have rolled around once more.

"We'll take Christmas dinner in New York," Jimmy says, "and a show afterward, and——"

"Here comes the trolley car, Jimmy," says his wife.

"None for me," says Jimmy. "Thank Heaven, we don't have to ride. I hope I never have to ride again. Let's walk."

But the triumvirate—they never have forgotten one Christmas of their lives. That was the time when one of them sent a Christmas cablegram to the other two in London:

Stung. And by a woman.—SHIFTY SHIFT.



AVOWED OPTIMISM

It's better to own nothing than be worried over what one has.
Enjoy what you enjoy harder than you dislike what you dislike.
Each of us is sometimes just what he should be all the time.

Warwick James Price

AN INEVITABLE CHRISTMAS

By Marion R. Oliver

I.

"**T**HANK God for hotels," growled old Captain Hammond, as he stamped down the cold, empty corridors to the smoking-room. The hall-boy, a delicate Tyrolese lad, held the door open.

"The gentleman has had a pleasant walk?" he asked in his deliberate English. The hotel was empty; with no one but the fat concierge to talk to, he felt lonely.

"I did n't address you," snapped the old man.

The boy flushed and shrank back. "Excuse me," he said, with an awkward little bow. "I saw the gentleman was alone, and I only thought that at Christmas-time he——"

"Look here, young man," interrupted Hammond, "I don't need your sympathy. I like to be alone at this time of year. I'll thank you not to remind me of to-morrow. I don't like it. Understand!"

"I am sorry, sir," said the hall-boy.

He left the smoking-room on tiptoe, and, full of his experience with "the American who hated Christmas," hurried to the office to confide in the fat, sympathetic concierge. In the front sitting-room he passed the only other guests in the hotel, a young, dark-haired girl and her brother. The two young people stopped talking until the hall-boy had glided out of hearing.

"Mother is better, I hope," said the brother. He wore a long black cassock, girt with a wide band of watered silk.

"Don't worry, Ludwig," the girl answered; "she will be quite well to-morrow. Of course she would come twice as far to spend Christmas with you, but the journey does tire her. Besides, she has had worries about the estate; the troubles across the border have made the peasants hard to deal with."

"I hate to be a continual burden to her," said the brother moodily. "However, I shall be ordained in the spring, and then I can make my own way."

The girl clasped her hands with nervous force. "You have never been a burden. You have no right to say that. The estate is all yours if you choose to claim it." She paused a moment, breathless. "Will they give you back to us for all Christmas day?" she asked eagerly.

The theologian smiled affectionately. "All but the morning, greedy one! We are to have a tree for the men who could n't go home. You would not like me to desert them, would you?"

The concierge rolled in on his short legs to announce that luncheon was ready.

Captain Hammond was already seated at the long, bare table when the young girl and the theological student came into the cheerless dining-room. They drew back two empty chairs at his left and sat down. During the first long pause after the chilled soup, he boorishly avoided any beginnings of conversation. He drew from his pocket a worn, leather-covered diary, and seemed absorbed in the close written record. On the first page, in faded ink, was the entry of his initial Christmas abroad, almost thirty years ago. It had been a desperate flight into unknown lands to hide or forget his pain; since then he had come to Europe every winter. Little by little the wounds had healed; he would never again suffer like that, thank God!

He put the book back in his pocket and looked through the curtainless windows at the towering mountains. The long line of glittering snow oppressed him. His life seemed very lonely, very empty. Columns of figures, statements of his increasing possessions, stood side by side with the record of his winter voyages. He tried to cheer himself with the net gains of each year—his little Christmas present, as he called it—but such happiness seemed at best a mockery. He was an old man; how many such Christmases must he expect?

"I see by your Loyal Legion button that you are an American officer. I am so glad. We are half Americans ourselves."

The dark-haired girl on his left was speaking. He made no answer. She hesitated, embarrassed by his coldness. "It must be sad," she stammered, "to be alone in a strange country at Christmas-time."

Her brother leaned forward and interrupted her. "You are mistaken, Mary; the gentleman does not care for Christmas."

"How do you know?" growled the old man. He looked at his neighbors more closely; their faces attracted him curiously, both were so frank, so full of hope and life.

The brother explained that he had overheard the hall-boy gossiping with the concierge, and all three laughed. The old man's ungracious exterior had half vanished; he began to boast of the number of times he had crossed the ocean. He seemed to delight in his hobby of avoiding a Christmas at home. "I don't know why a stranger should bore you with the history of his stupid goings and comings," he said, when he had talked for some time. "I always make a firm resolution to keep my mouth shut at this season of the year; but I did n't expect to find countrymen here."

"Our mother is an American," said the theologian. "But you

could n't avoid your countrymen here. There are at least thirty Americans in the Innsbruck Seminary."

"All shut up inside four walls," added the girl, with a delicious pout. "What good or harm could they do a compatriot?"

"Will you come to our tree to-morrow, sir?" There was something winning in the young man's burst of hospitality. "I hate to think of you spending Christmas in this dreary hotel. The other Americans will be wild with delight to see some one fresh from home. My sister will pilot you as far as the seminary gate, and I'll tell the lay brother to bring you straight to the refectory."

"But you are Catholics!" interposed Hammond. It was a last clutch at his vanishing unfriendliness. "What little religion I have is Protestant."

"The stable at Bethlehem is small," answered the theologian, "but no one was ever turned away who wanted to come in."

The old man flushed under his beard; it was impossible to resent his junior's unconscious piety. He murmured some half-intelligible words—an awkward acceptance of the invitation.

"And you are still in the army?" asked the girl. She hoped to change the embarrassing trend of the conversation.

"Oh, no," Hammond answered; a hard look came into his eyes. "I was not made for a soldier. I enlisted only because I thought it to be my duty. I hardly know why I wear the button, for when I laid my uniform aside I was the happiest man in the world."

There was an underlying tone of tragedy in the old man's bitterness, which did not escape the young girl. She timidly put her hand on his arm. "I am so sorry," she said.

Hammond looked up sharply. A something about the sensitive mouth, the sympathetic, comprehending eyes, touched old springs of feelings with renewing life, and a desire to justify his attitude swept him out of his usual reserve. He turned to the girl eagerly, almost youthfully. "It is true I had no love for fighting," he explained, "no enthusiasm to help me over the rough places; but I tried to do my best. I was engaged to the woman I loved; perhaps you do not yet know what that means, my child. I wanted to be near her. I dreaded death."

"But you did your duty," she said. "She must have loved you more for that! She must have been prouder to marry you!"

Hammond stared straight ahead; his face was drawn. "It is a long time ago," he said. "Most people have forgotten. Most people do not care. My child, I was away three years. I know she tried to keep her word, but there was another man, an attaché of the Austrian legation—the right man. When I came home I was so happy I could n't see things straight, and she was too honorable to help me. I know she meant to marry me, but two days before our wedding she could n't stand

it any longer. She eloped with the Austrian. He married her in Canada. A week later he came back to find me. I have never forgotten how he met me. No preliminaries, no excuses; he only said, 'Captain Hammond, I come to offer you satisfaction.' I might have shot him." The old man laughed grimly.

"But you did n't—you forgave him and her, too," said the girl excitedly. Her brother, at first absorbed in the conversation, had grown white and frightened.

"I never forgave myself," answered Hammond evasively. "The wedding had been set for the last of November. I had been making a thousand plans for our first Christmas together, and when I lost her I could n't stand the thought of being alone at a season when every one else was happy. I had a little money, and I came to Europe. Since then I have worked like a slave. Work helped me to forget. I have made money. I fear that it has become my god and master. But the old wounds have all healed. Only towards Christmas they threaten me, and I come abroad to end one and begin another year all by myself."

"And you have never seen her since?" said the theologian; his voice was low and strained.

"No. What would have been the use? Even without seeing her, the fight was hard enough. Had we met by chance, I should have run away. Ten minutes in her presence might have undone all that pain and work had managed to accomplish for me."

"I think she must have always longed to see you," said the girl softly, "to thank you, to ask your pardon."

"Perhaps," said the old man doubtfully; "we men so seldom understand——"

"I must get back to the seminary." The theologian broke the awkward pause a little abruptly.

They left the dining-room together. The girl's cheeks were flushed—Hammond's story had excited her; but her brother was quite himself as he took Hammond's dry, knotted hand between both of his.

"Don't disappoint us to-morrow, sir. My sister will be ready at nine o'clock to show you the way. Good-by."

The girl followed her brother to the front door of the hotel. Hammond hurried to the dingy office, where the fat concierge and the hall-boy were eating their luncheon.

"What are the names of those young people?" he asked. "Their faces seem familiar, and yet I cannot place them."

"That is the young Graf von Hohenburg and his sister," answered the concierge, delaying the knife loaded with cabbage on the way to his round mouth. "The father married an American. The family is very poor now. We take them at special winter rates when they come from their old place in Galicia and the hotel is empty. The father is

long since dead, and the *Frau Gräfin* and her daughter live alone. My brother was valet to the old *Graf*, and he often said that the American alliance did the noble family no harm. Such is seldom the case. The *Frau Gräfin* is an old woman now, but my brother remembers her when she was not ugly."

"Was not ugly!" interrupted Hammond fiercely. "Why, she was the most beautiful girl in——"

The concierge dropped his knife, and the cabbage splashed on the hall-boy's blue trousers. Captain Hammond stammered, tugged at his beard, and turned abruptly away. He seized his hat and stick, and, pushing open the door, strode into the driving snow.

When the hall-boy had cleared away the dishes, and rubbed the grease stain from his uniform, he walked to the big front window and flattened his nose against the cold glass. He looked sadly at the hotel gardens, and thought of his father's farm, a league away, at the foot of the snow-covered mountains. "*Herr Je!*" he sighed. "I must stay here to-morrow to serve these unbelievers. I may not see our tree, and the candles, and the old mother. I have read that Chinese and English pagans have curious, unchristian customs. It is true. I have seen it with my own eyes. They hate the Lord's Birthday."

II.

As the *Gräfin Mary* came down the hotel stairs the concierge hurried forward to wish her a merry Christmas.

"*Ach, gnädige Fräulein,*" he said, "you are taking the old gentleman to a Christmas tree! God will bless you. Perhaps you and the *Herr Graf* can melt some of the ice around his poor heart, and when I go to church I will pray for him. Listen to the bells!"

The mightiest bell in all Tyrol, the bell of the Jesuit church, which needs eight men to swing it, boomed out on the cold, clear air, calling Innsbruck to high mass.

On their way to the seminary the *Gräfin Mary* and Hammond stopped to gaze with the children at the open window in the high tower. For a second, at the end of every sweep, the great blue lip of the swinging bell was visible. Its peals were very loud, but a tone of underlying sweetness softened the clanging vibrations.

"I was sorry not to see you at dinner last night," said the girl. "Mother was ill, and I had to stay with her, but I told her about you. She thinks she knew you once in America."

The old man braced himself. Yesterday, during his long, cold walk, he had made up his mind. For the last thirty years he had determined, in such circumstances, to run away, and now he attempted to do so.

"No," he said. "The concierge told me your name. I never knew your mother; she must be mistaken."

The young *Gräfin* accompanied Hammond to the gate of the seminary; she did not allude to her mother again.

A pleasant, red-cheeked lay brother from the porter's lodge opened the door for the old man and led him down a long stone corridor to the refectory, where Hohenburg was waiting for him.

The entertainment had already begun, for nine o'clock seems a late hour to men who rise at four. Over a hundred theologians, in cassocks of all colors and shapes, were sitting at the long wooden tables, laughing, smoking, and talking. Five different languages and twice as many dialects blended in accents of good fellowship. Hohenburg introduced Captain Hammond to the chattering crowd. The seminarians accepted him at once as one of themselves, and he soon forgot that he was a gray-headed old man among beardless boys. A simple, healthy, childlike atmosphere was in the air. Hammond yielded to its influence and felt his heart grow warm within him.

An enormous Christmas tree, sparkling with lights, stood in the midst of the high, bare room, spreading its branches over a confused pile of many-shaped packages.

"This year," explained Hohenburg, "the Americans have invented a new kind of Christmas tree. Early in December they taxed every theologian who did not intend to go home for the holidays. Then they descended upon the shopkeepers of Innsbruck, begging all they could, and buying what they must. Every present has been numbered. Do you see the white Dominican in the lecturer's pulpit? He is the master of ceremonies. He has a list of all our names, and his biretta is full of numbers which correspond to the presents. You see there is a delicious element of chance in it all—a sort of sanctified American gambling."

Hammond laughed. "Every true man, priest or layman, loves a game of chance," he said.

An American medical student, a guest, like himself, from the outside world, claimed his attention. The young man knew some of Hammond's friends. The Christmas tree was soon forgotten, and the compatriots talked eagerly.

Hohenburg finally interrupted them.

"Forgive me, Captain Hammond, but do watch this. I am afraid the management intends to cheat a little."

The white monk shouted out a name. It was greeted with cheers. A chubby, red-headed little man with a grinning freckled face came forward, and drew a number from the biretta. The brown Franciscan who had charge of the presents put a large pitchfork in the expectant hands, and the Dominican addressed him in a short German doggerel. The old refectory was in a titter which burst into an excited shout at the conclusion of the poem.

"He is a great favorite," explained Hohenburg to Hammond, who

had not understood the Dominican's German verses, "but he is going away soon—to Africa, on the mission. We have provided him with a fork to give his cannibal converts when they come to eat him up."

"Rather gruesome, but, after all, quite fanciful," laughed Hammond. He was enjoying himself more and more every moment.

"Cannibals are few, but sudden deaths are plenty," said the medical student. He had not laughed at the joke, but kept his eyes fastened on the red-haired student. "Only last month two of their missionaries were barbarously murdered at the very station to which this man is going. Just look at that fat, grinning child! He is practically condemned to a horrible death. It may come a little sooner than usual; perhaps a little later; but within a year or so it will surely come. And they make a jest of it, these fellows, who live cheek by jowl with the other world!"

Hammond's laugh ended abruptly. He watched the freckled Frenchman with a morbid interest. It seemed impossible to realize that, far away from this snowy, peaceful valley, death in some horrible shape was waiting for the laughing boy.

"When the news comes from the mission," continued the medical student, "that this man with whom they have studied and joked and played ball has been cut down from behind, or tortured to death, God only knows when and how, they will all rush into the chapel, sing a *Te Deum*, and pray that they, too, may be found worthy so to die. Not exactly our way of the outside world, is it? We jest and speak lightly of things which these fellows only mention with bowed knee and reverential breath, but I've noticed we do not joke about death. Whatever other desires may be, first and foremost we want to live, and to us death is the negative of everything. These half-grown boys chuck our King of Terrors under the chin, and tell him that he is really a very decent sort of chap to have for a friend."

The white monk in the pulpit read out another name:

"Herr Hauptmann Hammond."

"Your turn!" shouted Hohenburg to Hammond across the table. He had just come back to his place, laden down with the books he had drawn in the lottery.

"But—but," stammered the old man—"I did n't put any money into the pool, you know. I did n't expect——"

"Nonsense!" whispered Hohenburg. "Do you think we could invite you to our tree and then have no present for you? They are waiting. Hurry up or you'll hurt their feelings."

Hammond, much embarrassed, stumbled across the long refectory. As he passed between the tables the theologians patted him on the back and wished him good luck. The white monk leaned over the edge of the pulpit and held out his hand.

"Mairrie Tismiss," he said, and then threw himself back, shouting with laughter at his own daring. These two English words had been learned especially for the old stranger's benefit.

Hammond drew a number and walked to the tree.

"Number 58," said the brown Franciscan, and put into Hammond's hands a little photograph frame of wood and twisted iron.

"Did you have luck? What did you get?" demanded Hohenburg and his neighbors, like excited children, as Hammond came back to his place. With all of a boy's delight in an unexpected gift, the old man exhibited his frame.

"But the most astonishing thing is the number itself," he said in a burst of confidence, "for I am fifty-eight years old this very day. I was a Christmas present myself once."

Hohenburg jumped to his feet and rapped on the table with his long student's pipe.

"*Silentium! Silentium!*" he cried in a loud voice, that resounded through the high, white-washed refectory. "Are the presents almost all distributed? Good! Then I have an announcement to make. I have just now discovered that this is our guest's birthday. Had we known it before, we could have celebrated it more worthily, but, as things are, we will do our best. Congratulations are now in order."

The white monk pounded on the reader's desk and called for "three *Hochs*" in honor of *Herr Hauptmann Hammond*. The room rang with shouts, the clapping of hands, and the sounds of bare tables beaten with many long pipes. When the noise subsided, every one pressed towards the embarrassed old soldier.

"Run to the refectory, prefect," whispered the Dominican to the brown Franciscan monk, "and ask for some beer to drink the captain's health. *Es ist doch ein ganz fidele alte Haus.*"

In a few minutes the rosy-cheeked lay brother was handing out tall glasses of beer from a little buttery hatch in the refectory wall.

"*Herr Hauptmann, auf Ihr ganz Spezielles!*" Hammond's health was drunk with great ceremony.

The white monk made a speech of congratulation, and Hohenburg, in a mixture of English and German, asked Hammond to reply.

The old man tried to thank the kindly young people who crowded around him, but, touched by their genuine friendliness, he often lost control of his voice. Whenever he paused in his hesitating, halting sentences, the theologians applauded vigorously. "*Hoch soll er leben, dreimal hoch,*" they sang in chorus. When he had finished they formed in line and one by one shook him by the hand. The white monk, an emotional Pole, thrilled by the excitement of the moment, flung his arms round the old man and kissed him on both cheeks.

It was almost twelve o'clock when Hammond said his last good-bys.

"Come and see where I live, before you go," said Hohenburg, slipping his hand through Hammond's arm.

When they entered the barely furnished little study, Hohenburg went to his desk, removed a photograph from a frame standing beneath his crucifix, and put the picture into his guest's hands.

"See," he said; "it just fits your frame. At luncheon yesterday I knew who you must be, sir," he continued. "My sister knows nothing of Captain Hammond, but my mother has often spoken with me about you, and your generous conduct in the old days. You do not want to see her again—I quite understand that; and to know that you are here might give her pain. Her life has not been very happy in these last years, and I would not add anything to her burden. I will persuade her not to appear at luncheon to-day, and to-morrow she leaves for home. But I want to give you her picture as our Christmas present—hers and mine."

The old man started towards the door. With his hand on the knob he waited, fighting with himself. Then he turned quickly and came back to Hohenburg.

"Give me the photograph," he said eagerly. He took it in both hands and looked at it intently, his lined face working with half-suppressed emotion.

"So changed!" he murmured. "So changed!"

For some time he seemed quite unconscious of the young man's presence; he was living over again the old terrible days.

"Will you take a message to your sister?" he said finally. "Tell her that it was I who made a mistake. I remember the Gräfin von Hohenburg very well; I have never forgotten her. Ask your mother to come down to luncheon to-day. I have waited too long to give her my Christmas greetings."

He left the astonished Hohenburg without further explanations, and hurried out of the seminary.

"Jesus Maria Joseph!" laughed the hall-boy, as he emptied the sticky contents of his pockets upon the little concierge's fat knees. "These foreigners! Yesterday the old man scolded at children and cursed the Saviour's Nativity. And now he is so full of love for all mankind that he grins at every passer-by. He took me to the sweet shop, but he made so many silly jokes with the girls behind the counter that I had shame for his gray hairs, and took him away before I had eaten half enough. Thou hast lived among these strange people, concierge. Explain how can these things be?"

The concierge did not answer immediately. He was giving silent thanks because the Christ Child had heard the prayers offered by His cradle.

"Christmas is like the sun," he said. "It is ordained of God, and it gives light and warmth whether men will or no."

"Thou art a good man, concierge," said the boy slowly. "Why hast thou neither wife nor children? On Christmas——"

"Away to thy home, child of wrath!" cried the fat little man, smiling through a mist of tears. "Only bring me a candle from thy tree, a blessing from thy mother. What should I do with children? I cannot even teach a lazy hall-boy to respect his elders!"



THE MADONNA'S GIFTS

BY CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

TWO gifts the dear Madonna gave
 To this poor world of pain;
 Two gifts besides her blessed Son
 Who for our sake was slain;
 Lo! down the years her love and tears
 Have flowed like springtime rain.

Her mother love has made the world
 Thrice hallowèd and good;
 Her mother tears have cleansed the earth
 Like her Son's blessed blood,
 And every mother since she wept
 Has wept in motherhood.

And this I know: When Mary loved
 She loved with such high power
 That every mother of the earth
 Has known one perfect hour
 Of love like hers that wakes and stirs
 As doth an April flower.

And if they shed but one dim tear
 Like those pure tears she shed,
 How wonderful their lives have been,
 How strangely honorèd!
 O Mary, let each woman-heart
 Bleed as thine own once bled!



A DOLL "MID CLOTHES"

BY LUCY COPINGER

"Piece of earth,
Good Will two men,
Sang thangel,
Sore again."

THUS chernubically but sadly chorused the blond Frederick William. The occasion was the last day of school before the Christmas holidays, and the cause of Frederick William's sadness was a certain bag, containing three anise-seed cakes, that lay upon Miss Lucy's desk. In a rash moment he had proffered the cakes—minus only one small nibble—and they were gratefully accepted and placed with the fifty-eight other tokens of Class A's regard. Immediately upon this act Frederick William had been overwhelmed by the dreadful regret that only the stingy can know, and even as he sang he was debating with watering mouth the possibility of staying after school and getting back the cakes.

The carol was the final number of Class A's Christmas entertainment, which had been an unusually successful one. The diffused Christmas spirit that had loosened the heart-strings of Frederick had softened even Anna Karenina, and she had emerged for the time from the anarchical gloom that generally surrounded her. A real Christmas tree stood in one corner, and Miss Lucy, who fondly believed in her artistic capabilities, had drawn upon the board a Santa Claus whose anatomical proportions, owing to a difficulty over his arms and legs, were somewhat out of gear. Like many a better artist, however, she had cleverly concealed this weakness in line beneath a brilliant combination of shading, so that Santa Claus's complexion glowed like a Turner landscape.

In these auspicious surroundings the histrionic ability of Class A

had blossomed forth. In his best manner Bum O'Reilly had sung a disreputable ditty chronicling the bibulous escapades of a certain "Charley Bock"; Sophie Bauerschmidt, whose sister, as she told Miss Lucy, was an "elocutioner," rendered "Curfew"; and Herman Bureschy, who belonged to the Newsboys' Brigade, gave the twisted petition:

Turkeys is here.
Christmas are fat.
Please drop a nickel
In the newsboy's hat.

The only interruption of the day had been a slight mishap to Sophie. Although the weather was of a seasonable coldness, she had worn a pair of white slippers as holiday attire. When she got to school she promptly took them off and put them carefully in her desk, while she sat in her stocking feet, the envied of all the other little girls. In the middle of the entertainment Miss Lucy, investigating a wail from Sophie, found that one of her slippers had fallen to the floor, and Anna Karenina, evidently the victim of an overpowering feminine spite, had immediately and venomously spit upon it. However, by means of a little skilfully applied chalk and diplomacy things were smoothed over, and Christmas peace was again restored.

At last the most interesting part of the programme came—the distribution of the candy that it was the school's custom to give to each of its scholars. With infinite pains and a quantity of red flannel and raw cotton, Miss Lucy had dressed up one of the higher-grade boys, and as the patron saint of the season he was at first accepted with universal breathlessness. Toward the end of the distribution Miss Lucy heard the loud and disdainful tones of Anna.

"Id's a lie," she declared sceptically. "Thad ain'd no Sanda Glaus. Id's Josef Valinsky. He ain'd god no teeth in the frond, and I knows him."

At this disclosure, Miss Lucy, who had overlooked this telltale absence of two of Josef's teeth, hastily hustled him out of the room. In departing he turned and, forgetting his jovial character, shook his fist at Anna.

"Wait till I git a holt of you," he cried revengefully.

"He fell out of his sleigh, children," Miss Lucy explained to the class. "If it was n't Christmas, Anna," she continued vexedly, "I'd stand you in the corner for talking out from your seat."

Then the bell rang, and all save a few choice spirits departed, already sticky and entirely happy, and Miss Lucy was left to a helpless contemplation of the fifty-nine presents piled upon her desk. There were three strings of beads, two of last year's calendars, seven scratchy handkerchiefs, and ten cups and saucers of dreadful design and color,

from the purely ornamental kind that, as Sophie explained, "you sets on your mantel," to a large mustache cup with a gilt lettered "Father" upon it. Sophie had brought a picture of herself. "It's my tin-tag," she told Miss Lucy, "und my mother says that it ain't so gut, so I can gif you one." Rosa Bureschy gave a heart-shaped and mottoed peppermint; Otto Dietrick, whose father's business, owing to the inducement of "a hot sausage with every drink," was a thriving one, and who was therefore the bloated capitalist of the class, had contributed a bottle of wine. Even the weak-minded Josef Bureschy, whose mother worked in a sweat-shop, had brought a particularly shiny and much loved "west button." Miss Lucy counted them all, down to the nibbled seed-cake of the unhappy Frederick William. Fifty-nine, and Class A's roll numbered sixty. She glanced back to where on the outskirts of the group that surrounded her lingered her sixtieth scholar. Anna Karenina, even dirtier than usual, stood with a sullenness that was both wistful and unapproachable, and gazed at something with a gaze of hopeless, agonized longing. Following the look, Miss Lucy saw that it rested upon a large, flaxen-haired doll clad in pink silk that Marie Schaefer had brought.

In all Anna's neglected childhood she had never had but one doll. It was the gift of a charitably inclined lady whose fad was slumming, and, with her usual overwhelming intensity of emotion, Anna had bestowed upon it an almost savage outpouring of mother love. The gutters and gangs of her street life knew her no more, for she now preferred to sit on the floor in the corner of the dirty room and nurse the doll. When not guarding her treasure, she wrapped it up in a greasy newspaper and hid it under the bed. One luckless day the silkiness of its trappings caught the frivolous eye of Mrs. Karenina, and when Anna came home from school the beloved doll was lying, a poor, naked creature, upon the floor. Another child would have sensibly clothed the denuded body in a ragged makeshift, but the outrage was too much for Anna's mould. She took the doll and beat it upon the floor. It was not until it was completely destroyed that she flung herself down beside the ruin and cried. Since then the lady had gained a new fad, and Anna's days were doll-less.

There was so much of forlornness in the child's attitude as she stood and looked at the more fortunate Marie that Miss Lucy was tempted to brave the rebuff that always met her advances to Anna.

"Do you like dolls, Anna?" she began timidly.

"No, miz, I hade them," said Anna savagely. "I god a lod home, bud I hade them."

"Miz, she's telling lies!" cried Sophie indignantly. "She ain't got none. I got a doll mit clothes," she finished, with a challenging glance at Marie.

"I god a lod," Anna repeated sullenly, "mid clothes." Then she stuck out her tongue in a wicked face that included Marie, Sophie, and even Miss Lucy. When you have no white slippers and no dolls it is a dreadful thing to have flouted in your face the finery and the china-eyed children of others.

"Oh, Anna," said Miss Lucy, "you must n't make faces. Come and see all the pretty things."

"They ain'd nothin'," said Anna scoffingly. "My mother's god a bink weil." If Miss Lucy had but known it, this same pink veil, which was the most beautiful thing Anna knew, had been privately destined by her for Miss Lucy's present. That morning she had calmly stolen it, only to be prematurely discovered and beaten.

"Miz, she nefer brung you nothin'," Sophie went on, with the superiority of the "not so gut tin-tag," "and her mother ain't no gut, my mother says."

"She's god a bink weil," said Anna valiantly. "Und you shud ub. I god a doll mid clothes."

"Well, but would n't you like another?" asked Miss Lucy. There was some belated shopping to be done the next day, and in the afternoon the distribution to the "Empty Stockings," but the thought of Anna's evidently doll-less existence was not a pleasant one. Perhaps—

Here she was interrupted by Sophie.

"Miz, look!" she cried, pointing accusingly at Frederick William. "He's eating the present wot he gif you!"

Miss Lucy looked at Frederick William, around whose mouth was a suspicious crumbiness, and, noting the disappearance of the bag of anise-seed cakes, she knew that the heart of Frederick had been comforted, and the number of her presents reduced to fifty-eight. This incident and the problem of packing the numerous pieces of bric-à-brac into the basket provided by the janitor occupied Miss Lucy until, acutely conscious of much clatter, a smiling conductor, and a bottle of wine sticking rakishly out of the basket, she got on the car and waved a farewell to the little group upon the pavement.

The next day was Christmas Eve, and Miss Lucy, sitting in her room as the short winter afternoon was changing to dark, surveyed the gifts of Class A helplessly, and wondered if her Celtic washer-woman would accept the ten cups and saucers, along with the bottle of wine. Miss Lucy's own gifts, artistically tied with holly ribbon, also lay before her, and there was one box in which was a wonderful doll destined for a pampered niece, who was already the mother of six. As Miss Lucy's eyes fell upon the doll, she thought remorsefully of Anna. She had forgotten all about her! She had been so busy, and then all afternoon she had been at the Empty Stocking Fillers, her pet charity. Surely when, in spite of new shoes that vanity has caused to

be too small, you have stood for three hours and helped to distribute substantial cheer to a thousand or more children, you can be excused for a single oversight. Besides, the Bureschys were Miss Lucy's especial charge. Lizzie Bureschy was such a pretty, affectionate little thing, and Anna was so ugly and ungrateful.

"But she nefer gits nothing," Miss Lucy repeated. "I wish I had remembered; but perhaps she was there this afternoon, and it's so nice and warm and comfortable here—and those shoes——" Here Miss Lucy, luxuriously toasting her slippered feet, leaned back lazily. Then she got up and, pulling the curtain aside, looked out into the empty street. The electric lights shone blue and cold. In the distance she could hear faintly the toot of an occasional Christmas horn. A very light snow had fallen in the morning, but a sharp wind had swept it away. With the night a still cold had fallen, and the gutters were frozen hard. How good it was to be in a warm room! Just then Miss Lucy caught sight of a little shadow across the street that as it came into the light revealed a pink fascinator and a ragged stocking. "Why, it's Anna Karenina!" cried Miss Lucy. "What in the world——" The next minute she was flying down to the door.

Anna Karenina stood on the steps, and in her hand was a bundle wrapped in greasy newspaper. As Miss Lucy opened the door she thrust it disdainfully into her hand.

"Id's for you—id's a Gristmus bresend," she said rapidly. "I don'd wand id. Id ain'd nothin'."

"Oh, Anna, wait!" cried Miss Lucy, running down the steps after her. Anna paused for a moment upon the lowest step.

"Id's a doll mid clothes," she said thickly, twisting one ragged leg around the other in a very agony of renunciation, "und id's god a bink dress—but id ain'd nothin'. I god a lod."

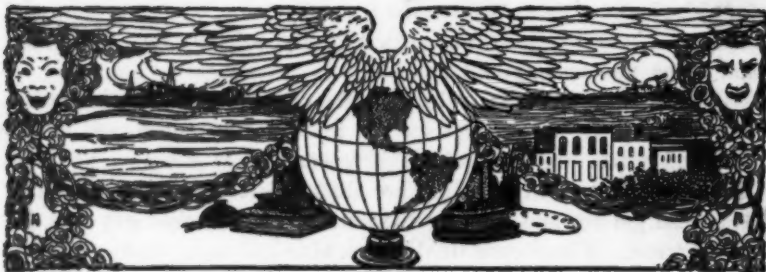
Then she vanished down the street.

Miss Lucy ran to the corner, but the pink fascinator was already lost in the shadows. She returned and, sitting down upon the step, she unrolled the newspaper. Inside was a small white net stocking edged with red worsted, that she recognized as one of those given out that afternoon by the "Empty Stockings." In the stocking was the usual toy—a flaxen-haired doll "mid clothes."

A few minutes later Miss Lucy, struggling into her coat, met the astonished "Where?" of her family.

"I'm a selfish wretch," she explained, jabbing her hat-pin viciously in place, "and it's going to have a pink dress, and it's eyes will shut, and when you poke it in the stomach it will say 'ba,'" she finished, as she slammed the door.

And that was how it came about that Anna Karenina that Christmas came into possession of a doll "mid clothes."



WAYS OF THE HOUR

A DEPARTMENT OF CURRENT COMMENT AND
CRITICISM—SANE, STIMULATING, OPTIMISTIC

THE SEASON OF GOOD CHEER

THE Season of Good Cheer—that is what Christmas has been since unnumbered ages before it was called Christmas; and it ought to be doubly so to-day. Can we make it so?

Yes, if we go at it in the right way. It's a question of three things: good will, energy, and pluck; with a strong seasoning of brains throughout the lot.

Intention first. You won't have good cheer yourself unless you're trying to bring good cheer to others. If you've diked yourself in from the flowing tides of human sympathy, your Christmas is bound to be a mockery. The fellow who is too consciously selfish to care how others feel, or too unconsciously selfish to think how they are likely to feel, is always sailing alien seas when the season of good cheer comes round. It's just as well. He is n't built for that sort of freight. He can carry money, and usually does; but the most moderate cargo of human sympathy and human enjoyment would send him to the bottom. If this means you, good-by.

Then energy. If you want good cheer, get out and hustle for it. Don't sit in your office and send kind thoughts by telepathy. Send the unkind ones that way; and trust Uncle Sam's mails with the others. Don't expect your friends to be mind-readers—there are times when you would n't like it if they were. If you're thinking of them, let them know it. If you've any good wishes, express them. And do it now. When good intentions are bottled up too long, they're liable to turn

sour; so use yours while they're fresh—and don't worry for fear the stock will get too low. Get busy.

Then pluck; last but by no means least, pluck. It takes pluck to make good cheer in any quantities; the sort of pluck that can take punishment without wincing; that can moult illusions without losing its appetite, and assimilate a new truth without prophesying the end of the world. You need it in all your business, and especially do you need it here. And you've got a right to it. The world is a good ways from being a garden of the gods, perhaps; but it's a long ways farther from being a house of detention for lost souls. Old Lady Luck may box your ears pretty sharp now and then; but she's got an apronful of big red apples for you if you'll only pester her long enough. Try it and see. Keep up your courage; and keep up the courage of others who may need a little boost in that direction. Pass a good thing along.

Good will, energy, and pluck; with brains mixed all through. These are what make Good Cheer—and this is the season of Good Cheer. Some day that season will last all the year around—and then we'll call it Brotherhood.

GEORGE L. KNAPP

THE CHILD SPIRIT AT CHRISTMAS

THE Dark-Glass Man who heralds the passing of the Christmas Spirit is thrice premature.

He has forgotten the Child. So long as the Child lives, the divine spirit of the holy festival will be a vitalizing factor throughout all Christendom. How could it be otherwise when the spirit of childhood is Love, and the Christmas spirit has as its very essence "good will toward men"? Because we of older growth have allowed our minds to become tarnished by the rust of emulation, shall it be said that Gilead lacks balm, or that Yuletide has become a grim anniversary of dread instead of a festival of joy? Not so whilst children exist, for where is the child the rose of whose existence is not dated from Christmas to Christmas? True, it tells its precious rosary of jewelled hours day by day, but it waits and watches its little calendar for the blessedest day of all the year, until time circles again to the child's own day.

"The Night Before Christmas!" Glorious night of enchantment! What raptures of fear and agonies of bliss it brings! What blood-chilling sounds, what delicious, spine-creeping possibilities, until, half mad with excitement, the child cowers beneath the covers, listening to—what? Hoofs—eight tiny reindeer hoofs. Dawn is three hours old when sleep releases the child's holden eyes. Quickly two tiny feet are thrust into two tiny slippers, then, cautiously—oh, so cautiously—

hair ready at a sound to stand on end (for not a soul is yet astir), the child goes step by step to—realization.

Ah, trusting, blessed Babes of the world, whilst you live, who dare say that the Spirit of Christmas is dead?

What next? The Divine Spirit—manifest since the very breath of the Christmas spirit is “unto others.” The child wishes to share its toys and sweets with neighboring playfellows, for what, pray you, would Christmas be to the child without a chorus of “Oh’s!” and “Ah’s!” from little visitors, and what child so selfish as to refrain from similar visits and exclamations, in turn? And oh, the never-ending marvel of those magic hoofs upon the roof-tops, and the greater miracle of how Santa ever did go down so many chimneys during one night! Dearly as the child loves to receive, its Christmas is spoiled if it cannot give—especially to one of those little ones whom the “so busy” Santa has not had time, or has forgotten, to visit. That their beloved, rotund Saint would willingly pass the least among them by, no child would believe.

When, at the close of the happy, happy day, comes the tale of the Holy Child, rapt indeed is the listener. Verily, when this Babe (grown man) commanded the people to “suffer little children to come unto Him,” He saw far down into the ages how little pilgrims would continue, mentally, to kneel before that lowly manger in Judea long after time had destroyed the sacred place. That Love restores it for one Holy Day each year for the dear children’s sake, is true, and so, weave ye never so deftly your “fairy” webs, story-tellers of to-day, never hope to rival the wonder-story of that lowly Child in the childish hearts of to-day, or to-morrow’s morrows.

Dear little children of the frozen North, and dear little ones of the Southland, and you who dwell where the compass points “east,” and you who live where the sun sets in the far away West, everywhere are you filled with the true spirit of the Great Festal Day. What teachers of the purblind you are! What unconscious cicerones toward the Better Way.

MINNA THOMAS ANTRIM

THAT BUGBEAR CHRISTMAS

THE flushed, o’erworked dame plumped down triumphant. “There!” she gasped. “I’ve done up sixty packages. But oh dear!” she moaned, “here it is only a week before Christmas, and what *shall* I get for John!”

Sixty gifts arranged, and still somebody unprovided for! Dreadful

predicament! Yet, as like as not, her wail echoed responsive in ten thousand bosoms. Such is Christmas nowadays.

Thus has it been made a bugbear for the average adult. The mental strain of choosing, the physical strain of procuring, the moral strain of accepting what one despises and bestowing where one begrudges—the constant seesaw by which one strives to maintain one's social balance—make one rejoice, not when Christmas approaches, but when Christmas is over.

The Universal Peace Commission would do well to take up this matter of Christmas, along with other peace matters; and by limiting the price of a gift to ten cents, and by restricting each giver to the single gift all around, eliminate this false notion of the Christmastide, which substitutes the substance for the spirit.

Christmas is the one festal-day of all when the earth should be free from ambition, greed, emulation, and obliquity; for to deliver the earth from such was born He whose infant coming is being celebrated.

EDWIN L. SABIN

THE INFLUX OF NEW SENATORS

WITH the wave of unrest engulfing the country, a mania to try new men pervades the people. It reaches high places. It is bewildering—the changes assured and probable and possible in the United States Senate. One loyal to the old lights sighs with uncertainty, because he knows their shines and shadows.

The Senate is not all that it should be, but it is far and away from being all it should not be. While the blast from the muck-heaps was blowing Senateward a while ago, I asked a stanch, invulnerable veteran to write me something for a magazine with which I am connected—something that should discreetly emphasize the inviolable integrity of the Senate. Said he:

“Eighty per cent. of the Senators are earnest, honest, patriotic, capable. Twenty per cent. are—not all of that. I could not commend the whole without commending the part—which would be impossible.” It was the sincere opinion of a devout Democrat. In the prospective changes some of the best are doomed or threatened—victims of local, factional fights.

It is deplorable that politics should pervade and dominate. It is worse that local prejudice and personal ambition dictate evolutions in the most powerful legislative body on earth. People are so easily influenced—so easily bought—to wrap the toga about new shoulders—a pretty piece of tapestry, to please a popular idol. Ages of experience have not taught them that agitation ends when the change is accomplished.

The new man begins at the bottom, while the old man leaves off well up the line. He retires to Committees on Ventilation, on the Disposition of Useless Papers in Executive Departments, on the Condition of the Potomac River Front, etc. Men of longer standing hold the important posts. The new light scintillated before the eyes of "home folks," and dazzled them. But the Senate is a mighty leveller. It eradicates bumptiousness without mercy. One who looms colossal at home and in his own opinion must search for himself with a microscope in the Sacred Chamber. It takes the best of them years to work into effective and useful adjuncts.

They do not accomplish what they promise, because they cannot. They do not know the rules and ropes. They are cats in a strange garret. They may talk—some of the rash ones do—but they do not effect the legislation. The state, the country, the world, are better served by keeping the old servants if they are among the eighty per cent. The factional fight that disturbs them wrongs the state and the nation. The toga ought not to be a plum for him who shakes hardest at the tree. The Senator who is not rich has enough distraction in making his salary pay his bills, without worrying over fences.

It is not the limber tongue, bedizened with rhetorical embroidery, which effects legislation. It wins plaudits from constituents, but not votes in the Senate. The impress of the man is made in the committee rooms, where legislation lies in swaddling clothes, to be nursed, reformed, deformed, or strangled. Along the line of the committees most men make slow progress to dominating importance. It is bad policy for a state to call off her veteran. Her new man will go into the awkward squad in spite of all his brilliancy upon the stump.

WILLARD FRENCH



WORDSWORTH

BY MARY COLES CARRINGTON

LAKE of the peaceful heart, thy beauty gleams
 Afar to us who weary of the sea!
 Reflected in thy breast all nature seems
 Transfigured by some subtle alchemy.
 The storm, the rugged peak, the forest green,
 The hosts of Heaven, thy mimicry beguile;
 Yet on thy brink the humblest flower may lean
 Unhurt—and greet its image with a smile.

WALNUTS AND WINE



ANXIETIES OF A MOTHER

"Come right in, grandma. You are just in time to see me bathe baby. He is the cutest thing. . . No, other babies *don't* look the same in the water. . .

"No, dear, I could n't trust you to help me—it has to be done exactly right. . . What? . . Oh, your bathing his father was entirely different—he was n't so small. . . Well, it does n't seem as if he ever could have been—he has such lovely broad shoulders now.

"If you watch me carefully, perhaps you will learn so I can trust you some time. . . I know, but that was so long ago. They don't do it that way now. It may have been all right in those old-fashioned days, but it's different now. You have to follow certain rules for sterilizing them.

"To start, you must have the water at just the right heat—you can tell by dropping a little on your wrist. . . There! I knew you were old timey. They don't use the elbow now at all. You'll have to learn all over again. . . No, I don't think the elbow can be as good a way, for there is n't a word about it in my 'Young Mother's Help.'

"Then, after you get the water to the right temperature, you see that the room is at 120 degrees—no, that's for the water. I'll just look at my book, for there must be no doubt on the subject. It would be awful if I got the water too cold. . . Too hot? No danger of that—that's why I test it on the wrist. I dropped a little on John's one day, and he hopped around for several minutes—made such a fuss! I told him that his son never acted that way. He said his son had probably not been boiled—yet. As if I would boil our precious baby!

"There, there, darling, mother is fixing it. Does he want his swim?

Walnuts and Wine

"Yes, grandma, he always cries that way. Don't take him up—that's the way he gets his exercise and strong lungs. You think they are strong enough now? It's what I call his morning voice culture. . . . Why, grandma, I never thought of that! If he should spoil his beautiful vocal organs! And he's a tenor, too!

"What shall I do? If I don't let him cry, he won't be strong enough to sing, and if I do, his voice will be ruined. . . . You think it would be better for him to laugh for his exercise? 'Mother's Help' says crying is good for them. I know what I'll do. I'll mix it. John Vincent can dance and make faces at him every morning, regularly—or would it be better to tickle him? His father is so ticklish, and Jacky is like him in most things.

"Now I am ready. See, I take his head in my left hand—so, supporting it at the back of the neck; then his feet in the right hand—so—— Bless his heart! did mamma let him slip? That's because I was trying to give grandma a lesson. I don't think he could have swallowed much, for he has stopped crying. His mouth too full? You don't think it will drown him? Shall I roll him on a barrel? That's what they generally do to resuscitate, is n't it? Look in my book, quick. On page 234, 'First Aid to the Injured'—never mind, he is crying again.

"Did mother swallow too much water for her baby Bunting? It's all grandma's fault, for she must learn to do just as I do, so if anything ever happens——

"Oh, grandma, I nearly die when I think something might happen to me, and then I would just have to trust him to you! Would n't it be awful? . . .

"Yes, I feel that no one can treat him like his mother. Mrs. Miller says that babies are 'fool-proof,' and I think her Daisy must be—for Mrs. Miller won't read my book. She says she does n't care to learn the latest things in babies.

"Maybe I had better dry him. I was so alarmed at the thought of your ever having the care of him, that I forgot. . . . Yes, you may just finish rubbing him while I fix his bottle.

"Grandma! Why, you are rubbing him the wrong way. That muscle goes this way—and this one goes that way. And around the eyes—so. You can't begin to massage them too early. . . . Well, I don't want him to look old before his time, do I? . . .

"Rock him to sleep? I am surprised at you. That is sure to jiggle them and does something to the brain—I have forgotten the name of the jiggle. John says it starts the wheels in his head, but I don't think my baby has wheels, do you?

Walnuts and Wine

“THIS is the genuine **‘PEARS’** as sold for more than 100 years past! I have sold it all **my** life, and know how good it is. It is entirely **pure** and there is **no water** mixed with it, it is **ALL SOAP** and lasts longer than any other; it is the **CHEAPEST** as well as the **BEST**.

“I could sell you an imitation at half the money and **make more profit on it too**, but I should be only **swindling** you if I did.”

All Rights Secured.

Pears' Annual for 1907 with 28 illustrations and four large Presentation Plates. The best Annual published—without any doubt. However, judge for yourself. Agents: The International News Company.

Walnuts and Wine

"Now you must take his bottle away every three seconds, and let him breathe once—or is it let him breathe three seconds and take his bottle away once? . . . You would n't like your food jerked away like that? Well, grandma, all I can say is that you are very old-fashioned."

Lonne Stevens

NERVE, SURE ENOUGH

"The nerviest individual that ever I encountered," says ex-Senator "Billy" Mason, "was a chap that dashed into a day-coach of an accommodation train running from Chicago to Evanston on an occasion when I was occupying a seat near the door.

"Just before this person appeared in my car, the other passenger or two and myself had heard a scuffling and yelling in the train-shed—in the confusion of which we distinctly heard some one shout, 'Stop thief!'

"Well, when this person did scamper into my car, he looked about for an instant or two with every appearance of a hunted animal. Then, a happy thought striking him, he dived under my seat, exclaiming as he did so:

"'Sir, I rely upon your honor!'"

William Heyliger

THE REASON

By Minna Irving

When Santa Claus one Christmas Eve
Went forth upon his round,
His list of presents and of names
Was nowhere to be found.
He hunted high and hunted low,
But all without avail
(The Teddy-bears, though, might have told
An interesting tale).

The jolly Saint is getting old;
His memory played him tricks;
And often he sat down to think,
Upon the topmost bricks.
He could n't somehow puzzle out
Just what he ought to leave,
And got the chimneys sadly mixed
That frosty Christmas Eve.

Walnuts and Wine



A Wise Mother

When she learned the facts, put the Coffee Canister in a far corner of the cupboard and began serving

POSTUM

to the whole family. The change brought steady nerves, sound sleep and good sturdy health. To get the agreeable flavour and sustaining food qualities, Postum must be made properly.

Therefore, be sure and boil your Postum according to directions on pkg.

"There's a Reason."

Get the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs.

Postum Cereal Co., Ltd., Battle Creek, Mich., U.S.A.

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

The rector got a pack of cards,
A gay old sport, behold!
Received a Bible richly bound
In Russia calf and gold;
A stately dame a meerschaum pipe,
A college youth next door
A thick red flannel petticoat
(Forgive him if he swore).

But when the Saint beheld next day
In letters bold and black
His sad mistakes in public print
He wept behind his pack.
"I need," he said, "a little help
Distributing, I guess;"
So that is why he sometimes sends
Our presents by express.

A BAGATELLE

Southerner: "After all, the Civil War was fought over a very small matter."

Northerner: "How's that? It involved the union itself."

Southerner: "No, just a little matter of spelling. The point involved was whether we should say the United States of America or the Untied States of America."

Ellis O. Jones

IN GEORGIA

"Why, John, it's as cold here in Georgia as it is in New York."

"Cold! Well, did n't we come south for the winter?"

J. Collins

THE "BROMIDE" AGAIN

George Ade, Oliver Herford, and several others were once swapping stories having for their basis the inability of the Briton to understand an American joke. The party laughed heartily at several of the tales, when a "bromide" who chanced to be present offered this perfectly obvious remark:

"Well, you can always tell an Englishman."

"Of course you can," said Ade, "but it does n't do any good."

Taylor Edwards

Walnuts and Wine

Shave Yourself with the "Gillette"

Compact? Rather! So much so that when you travel you will hardly miss the corner of the dress suit case in which you tuck away my razor.

There is concentrated in this little device of mine a great deal of science. It has taken over 600 operations to bring a Gillette Razor set to its perfect state. I don't know of a single thing about it to-day that can be improved. It is loaded to the muzzle with perfection, and the minute you take it out of the box it is ready to go to work for you—*no honing—no stropping*.

Over a million users will attest how well it does its work. A twist of the handle enables you to have as light or as close shave as you may desire. You cannot scratch or cut yourself with it.

When you use my razor you are exempt from the dangers that men often encounter who allow their faces to come in contact with brush, soap and barber shop accessories used on other people.

Like all good things, the "Gillette" has many imitators. Some of them have been audacious enough to steal some one of the many good points possessed by my razor. *All of them together, however, do not possess the merits of the "GILLETTE" as it stands perfected to-day.*

When you buy a safety razor get the best—the "GILLETTE." It will last you for the rest of your life. It is not a toy—it will always give you complete satisfaction.

The double-edged, flexible blades are so inexpensive that when they become dull you throw them away as you would an old pen.

King Gillette

An
Ideal
Holiday
Gift

The Gillette Safety Razor set consists of a triple silver-plated holder, 12 double-edged blades (24 keen edges), packed in a velvet lined leather case and the price is \$5.00 at all the leading Jewelry, Drug, Cutlery, Hardware and Sporting Goods Dealers.

Combination Sets from \$6.50 to \$50.00

Ask your dealer for the "GILLETTE" to-day. If substitutes are offered refuse them and write us at once for our booklet and free trial offer.

GILLETTE SALES CO.

271 Times Building, New York City

Gillette Safety Razor

NO STROPPING NO HONING



In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

THE ONLY PERFECT COUPLE

She was a widow and her second venture was a widower. He was a gentle soul and had n't much to say in response when his wife had a great deal to remind him of, especially when she compared him with her former, but when he did speak it counted. One night he went to sleep while she was telling him the old, old story. She followed him shortly. Along in the middle of the night she was awakened by his uneasy turning.

"John," she said, "are you awake?"

"Yes, Susan," he replied softly.

"What's the matter?"

"Oh, nothing, Susan; I was just thinking if your first had married my first they would have been the only perfect couple on earth."

Then he went to sleep again—while she was talking.

W. J. Lampton

A GENTLE HINT

A short time before Christmas a certain teacher required each member of the United States history class to tell which historical character he most admired, and give a reason therefor. One lad handed in the following:

"I admire William Penn most because he was kind to the savages. *He treated them.*"

The teacher took the hint.

B. E. P.

KEEPING THE FIGURE

By M. M. Lee

"Why is it you call money 'dough'?"

Asked a fair maiden of her beau;

And, grinning wide,

The youth replied:

"I guess because I knead it so."

SOMETHING NEW

"I hear, Mrs. Blowhard, that your daughter is quite an accomplished violinist."

"Oh, yes, indeed she is," returned Mrs. Blowhard, rolling up her eyes ecstatically. "She plays divinely on the violin, and accompanies herself on the piano."

M. Budd



While the Fire is Low.

A hot breakfast in a cozy warm room starts one right for the day. A cold dining room spoils the enjoyment of the meal.

The dining room or any room in the house can be heated in a few minutes with a

PERFECTION Oil Heater

(Equipped with Smokeless Device)

For instance, you could light it in your bedroom to dress by, then carry it to the dining room, and by the time the coffee is ready, the room is warm. Impossible to turn it too high or too low—never smokes or smells—gives intense heat for 9 hours with one filling. Every heater warranted.

The **Rayo Lamp** is the best lamp for all-round household purposes. Gives a clear, steady light. Made of brass throughout and nickel plated. Equipped with the latest improved central draft burner. Handsome—simple—satisfactory. Every lamp guaranteed.

If you cannot get heater and lamp at your dealer's, write to our nearest agency.

STANDARD OIL COMPANY
(Incorporated)



Walnuts and Wine

ANOTHER CIRCUS?

Alice, the six-year-old daughter of J. D. Burns, for many years P. T. Barnum's partner in the circus business, was visiting her aunt in the country.

Sunday morning the aunt took her niece to the village church. Alice watched everything in silence till the choir started to march in, when she whispered to her aunt in a voice loud enough to be heard all over the church:

"Aunt, I've been to a circus before!"

Charles C. Lynde

THE DAY AFTER

By Hugh Miller

In the dark last night I met her
And from her took a kiss,
And the sweetness of the nectar
O'erswept my soul with bliss;
But to-day I have a feeling,
A taste that's clear and keen,
And it tells me that the nectar
Was cold-cream and glycerine.

AN UNCERTAIN JOB

Michael Callahan, a section boss for the Southern Railroad in the little town of Ludlow, Kentucky, has a keen Gaelic wit. One warm afternoon, while walking along the railroad tracks, he found a section hand placidly sleeping beside the rails. Callahan looked disgustedly at the delinquent for a full minute and then remarked:

"Slape on, ye lazy spalpeen, slape on, fur as long as you slape you've got a job, but when you wake up you ain't got none."

Edwin C. Ranck

A GEM FROM INDIANA

A reader for a New York publishing house gives the following, quoted from a story submitted by an Indiana authoress, as being about the choicest bit he has come across in many years:

Reginald was bewitched. Never had the baroness seemed to him so beautiful as at this moment, when, in her dumb grief, she hid her face.

Howard Morse



THE REASONS IN THE CASE

THE reasons why The Knabe excels lie mostly inside the case. On the surface others may be nearly as distinguished, but the best adapted woods, iron, silver, wire, ivory, felt, chamois, glue and other materials; the inspecting by experts at hundreds of stages of progress; the putting together with a harmonious fitness felt only by the highest grade craftsmen of experience; the testing of result over and over by artists--these are the reasons for that supremacy which so decidedly makes

The KNABE PIANO

THE WORLD'S BEST PIANO

It costs four times as much to make The Knabe as an ordinary piano.
It costs twice as much to make The Knabe as an ordinarily fine piano.
But the price to you is little more than ordinary makes cost you.
And the terms--merely a matter of mutual understanding.

WM. KNABE & CO.

BALTIMORE

NEW YORK

WASHINGTON

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Walnuts and Wine

THE COLOR LINE

At the Army and Navy Club in Washington a number of "old-timers" were one evening swapping stories of the Civil War, when General Young told of a soldier in the Army of the Potomac who entertained some unique ideas as to his financial value, as well as of the method by which that value could be realized.

He was a white man, and was detailed for service as a teamster in a train that was driven for the most part by negroes. The darkies were hired at the rate of twenty-five dollars per month, but the white soldiers received no more than their regular pay, sixteen dollars.

The man in question appeared somewhat dissatisfied with this arrangement, and made an application to his captain.

"I should like," he said gravely, "to be appointed a negro by brevet, and be assigned to duty in accordance with my brevet rank!"

Fenimore Martin

DIFFERENT PACKAGE

"Roper says he always buys his cigars by the box."

"I don't believe it."

"Why?"

"That stuff is sold by the bale."

Jack Appleton

WHAT WE ARE COMING TO

"Is the room disinfected?"

"Yes, mother; and I have sterilized the curtains, deodorized the furniture, septicized all the fixtures, vaporized the air, washed my lips in an antiseptic solution, and——"

"Have you septicized the mistletoe?"

"Thoroughly, mother; everything is done. Arthur is waiting now in the hydrogen room."

"Then you may go in and let him kiss you, dear."

Herman Da Costa

MONDAY

By Edwin L. Sabin

"Why should they speak of 'blue' Monday?"

He asked, and engagingly grinned.

"It's happier, surely, than Sunday—

Being so many sheets in the wind!"

CHRISTMAS

Greatest Pleasure
is the giving of

Waterman's

The Pen with **Ideal** the Clip-Cap

Fountain Pen



A GIFT more expressive of faithfulness and good feeling cannot be conceived. It is always at hand; the little Clip-Cap (cost 25 cents) fastens it to the vest or coat, so that it is ready when you want it. Like the friend who gives it, a Waterman's Ideal can always be depended on—at home or abroad, in office, school, store or street, it will serve you as long as there is a drop of ink in the reservoir.

It is a gift of beauty; Christmas styles are silver and gold mounted, and the stores are full of them. It can be exchanged to suit the pen habit of the user, whether man, woman, or child. Beware of substitutes; buy only from responsible dealers.

L.E. Waterman Co., 173 Broadway, N.Y.

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WITH
PENS FOR GIFTS WE
SUPPLY HOLLY DESIGN BOX
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PLAIN	FILIGREE	CHASED	GOLD	PATCH
Nº12 \$2.50	Nº412 \$5.00	Nº12 \$2.50	MOUNTED	Nº402 \$7.50
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--14 4.00	--415 8.50	--14 4.00	--23 4.50	18 KT.
--15 5.00	--416 9.50	--15 5.00	--24 5.00	GOLD
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Walnuts and Wine

THE EXPLANATION

As a general rule, theatre passes are not issued on Saturday, this being the one day of the week reserved by the management for "straight money."

One Saturday evening, just before the rise of the curtain, a little German lady bustled into the manager's private office and said, "I got a bass, un' der feller behind der dicked cage says it ain't good to-nighd."

The manager surveyed the slip of paper, and replied, "Passes are good for any performance excepting Saturday, you know, madam. I really do not understand why you did not use it during the early part of the week. On what account is this?"

The little German lady reflected for a moment, and then, with an enlightened smile, answered, "On account of sickness."

W. Dayton Wegfarth

A DESERVED REBUKE

A certain author who is noted for his wit, and for never being at a loss for a reply, whatever the circumstances, was approached the other day at his club by some one who clapped him on the back and exclaimed, "Well, old fellow, glad to see you! How are you?"

The author turned, and, not recognizing the man, replied calmly, "I don't know your face, but your manner is very familiar."

Edith Robinson

THE NEW VERB

By Harold Susman

The butchers have a saying that
I hasten to repeat;
They speak about their customers
As "People that we meat!"

QUITE CREDIBLE

Seven-year-old Frank had just returned from a rehearsal of Christmas music to be rendered at the Sunday-school.

"Mamma," he cried, "we learned such a beautiful carol to-day. It began, 'Shout the glad tidings, exhausted we sing!'"

And his tired mamma, who had just finished a round of Christmas shopping, failed to see anything incorrect in her son's statement.

E. S. Johnson

Walnuts and Wine

Accurate As Its Big Brother



The Smallest Watch
Made in America

An ideal gift is the Lady Elgin
—in every respect a standard
Elgin—made as small as possible
without sacrificing Elgin
accuracy, durability and perfect
adjustment. The

LADY ELGIN

is sure to please and give lasting
and reliable service. Valuable
as a jewelry piece—invaluable
as a time piece.

Illustration actual size of watch.
Every Elgin Watch is fully
guaranteed—all jewelers have
them. Send for "The Watch,"
a story of the time of day.

ELGIN NATIONAL WATCH COMPANY, Elgin, Ill.

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Walnuts and Wine

THE LAST OFFICE

By Edwin L. Sabin

Behold poor Jones laid low in bed;
He could not sleep nor sup.
"You 're all run down," the doctor said;
So Death then wound him up.

LOCATED

A "ge'man of color," in relating some of his troubles to a friend, said in part:

"Yais, suh; en, mo'ovah, dey 's somebody done gone en tole mah lady frien', Miss Sybil Jackson, some things whut is ve'y highly detrumenshul ter mah standin' in de community. Miss Sybil tole me no mo' den yistiddy dat she done up en heahed f'om diffunt pahties ob 'reproachable rep'tation dat Ah was, in dey ve'y own language, a low-down, uppish, double-dishones' scoun'el en rep'obate; dat Ah 'd be a monst'ous good liah ef Ah did n't hab such a monst'ous bad 'membunce; en dat Ah 'd steal de worm f'om a po' ol' crippled-up bird ef dey wa'n't nobody lookin'."

"Is dat all whut dey said?" queried the friend.

"No, suh; dey said mo', much mo' dat 's cal'lated ter t'ar me down in Miss Sybil's esteem."

"Well," said the friend, "ez yo' pussonal frien', Jeems, all Ah kin say is dat, whosomever de 'sponsible pahties is, dey 's done come pow'ful close ter locatin' yo',—pow'ful close."

J. L. Sexton

ANOTHER WISE MAN

By E. F. Moberly

There was a man in our town,
And wondrous wise was he;
He took his axe one autumn day
And chopped down an old tree.

And when he saw the tree was down,
With all his might and main
He swung his axe with lusty strokes
And chopped it up again.

Walnuts and Wine

MENNEN'S

Borated Talcum
TOILET POWDER



As a Champion

protector of the skin and complexion of particular men and women, first comes

MENNEN'S BORATED TALCUM TOILET POWDER

a safe and pure healing and protective powder, the merits of which have been recognized and commended by the medical profession for many years. Winter winds have no ill effects where **Mennen's** is used daily, after **shaving** and after **bathing**. In the nursery it is indispensable.

For your protection—put up in **non-refillable** boxes—the “**box that lox.**” If **MENNEN'S** face is on the cover it's **genuine** and a **guarantee of purity**. Guaranteed under the Food and Drugs Act, June 30th, 1906. Serial No. 1542.

Sold everywhere, or by mail 25 cents. **Sample Free.**

Gerhard Mennen Co., Orange St., Newark, N. J.

Try **MENNEN'S Violet (Borated) Talcum Toilet Powder**.
It has the scent of fresh-cut Parma Violets.

Sent **FREE**, for 2-cent stamp to pay postage, one set **MENNEN'S Bridge Whist** Talles, enough for six tables.



In writing to advertisers, kindly mention **LIPPINCOTT'S**.

Walnuts and Wine

EXCHANGE OF CIVILITIES

A Confederate veteran met his former body-guard on the road.

"Is that you, Peter?" he called to the old negro who was grinning as he doffed his hat.

"Yas, suh, dis am me!"

"Well, well!" laughed the other. "I see that all the old fools are not dead yet."

"Dat 's so, Mars' Tom." Peter pulled his grisly forelock appreciatively. "I 's monsus glad to see dat you 's in such good health, suh!"

Elizabeth Henry Lyons

AS BETWEEN STUDENTS

Senior: "Hello! Where 's your chum? You started out together."

Beery Junior: "He ish (hic) three lamp-poshts behind."

G. A. Bolton

GOT HIS ANSWER

The victim of the dentist held up his hand.

"Doctor," said he, "before you put the lid on my conversation, will you answer a question?"

"Yes," said the dentist, selecting a square piece of rubber and snipping it with his scissors.

"Do people chew more on one side of the mouth than the other?"

"Sure," said the dentist, picking up the clamps.

"How interesting! Which side?"

"The inside," replied the dentist, slipping the rubber dam over the verbal one that issued from his patient's lips,

Jack Appleton

HER OPINION OF THEM

In the vicinity of Germantown there lived a worthy old Quaker lady and her son John, who were once called upon to entertain a number of ladies at dinner during Quarterly meeting.

As John began to carve the broiled chickens, he entered upon a flowery speech of welcome, but in the midst of his flattering utterances his mother, who was somewhat deaf, piped up from the other end of the table:

"You need n't be praising of 'em up, John. I 'm afraid they 're a lot of tough old hens, every one of 'em."

M. M. Lee

Walnuts and Wine

HOUSEKEEPING



is sure
to prove
an

unless,
on the
other hand,
you have

SAPOLIO

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

MAN OR BOY?

A certain officer of the army, who is of immense stature, being six feet four inches in height and tipping the scales at two hundred and forty pounds, has for many years been attached to a scientific bureau at Washington, and his writings are well known in the scientific world. Much of his work is done evenings, and sometimes he finds it necessary to carry home reference books.

One morning he gathered together several of the volumes, none of them very small, and, putting them under his arm, started for his office. He had not gone far when he came face to face with a darky lad who, with an expression of great wonder, planted himself directly in the path of the huge officer.

"Sakes alive, mister!" exclaimed the wondering boy, "is they sendin' *you* to school?"

T.

A DOUBTFUL COMPLIMENT

The police officers of a certain Canadian city possess both artistic temperaments and the spirit of hospitality. In front of the station house, where all prisoners are brought, stands a large bed of flowers arranged to spell the word "WELCOME."

Fred Gilbert Blakeslee

THE WAY IT'S DONE

By W. Dayton Wegfarth

"Mother, may I get in the swim?"

"Yes, my darling daughter.

Buy your gowns from a Frenchy store,
And don't wear half you oughter."

IN THE COMPOSING-ROOM

"Typo's sweetheart will not let him embrace her."

"Why not?"

"Because when she once gets her form made up, she does n't want it pied in going to press."

E. F. Moberly

A DISTINCTION

Minister (kindly): "Did I understand you to say that your neighbor's small boy has gone to heaven?"

Howard (unkindly): "I did not. I said he was dead."

C. A. Bolton

You Would Not Accept Counterfeit Money, Why Accept Counterfeit Goods

GOOD money is made by the Government in which you have implicit faith and confidence. Good goods are made by manufacturers who are willing to stake their reputations on the quality of the material offered to you through the medium of their advertisements in this paper. Counterfeit goods are not advertised. The reason for it is, they will not bear the close scrutiny to which genuine advertised goods are subjected. Counterfeit money pays more profit to the counterfeiter. Counterfeit goods are offered to you for the same reason.

Insist on the Genuine—Reject the Counterfeit

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

SHE KNEW

A physician in a town not far from Philadelphia, who has some practice among the colored population in the vicinity, was once awakened in the middle of the night by a frantic ring at his bell. Putting his head out of the window, he inquired, "Who's there?"

"It's me, Doctah. It's Dinah."

"Dinah! What do you want?"

"Ef yer please, sah, I wants yer ter come quick, ter see my ole man. He's pow'ful sick."

"Too bad. What seems to be the matter with him?"

"I know what's de mattah wid him, all right. It's indigestion ob de kidneys."

"You mean congestion of the kidneys."

"No, sah, it's indigestion ob de kidneys. He done eat four platefuls ob 'em, stewed, fer supper, and he ain't done slep' a wink since."

Henry H. Day

THE INFANT CATECHISM

Little Rosalie—aged six—was watching her mother label some glasses of preserves.

"Mother," said she suddenly, "what kind of preserves does God make?"

"Why, God does n't make preserves, Rosalie," answered her astonished parent. "Whatever made you think such a thing?"

"Yes, he does, mother," said the child. "I say it every Sunday in Sunday School. The teacher says, 'Why should you love and serve God?' and we say, 'Because he makes preserves and redeems us.'"

Marie A. Gilkeson

SURE SIGNS

Beryl: "Why are you so certain that Jack and you are desperately in love with each other?"

Sibyl: "We always say such hateful things to each other, and the madder we get, the happier we are!"

Peter Pry Shevlin

AFFINITIES

By Arthur W. Beer

The author kissed her fervently;

"Pray, let us wed!" he cried in haste,

For he discovered instantly

She had a literary taste!

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MILITARY TITLES DISCOUNTED

The late Senator Morgan once told a story illustrative of the cheapness of military titles a few years after the Civil War.

A traveller in the South was passing through a certain populous country district, and stopped to converse with a farmer who had a considerable number of men at work in his hay-fields.

"Most of these men are old soldiers," said the farmer.

"You don't tell me! Were any of them officers?"

"Two of them. One there was a private, and the man beyond was a corporal, but the man beyond him was a major, and that man away over-yonder was a colonel."

"Are they all good men?"

"Well," replied the farmer, "I ain't going to say anything against any man that fought for the South. That private's a first class man, and the colonel's pretty good, too, but I've made up my mind to one thing—I ain't going to hire any brigadier-generals."

Elgin Burroughs

QUERY

By Edwin L. Sabin

Since editors are busy,

Assuredly I fail

To see how they so often

Reply by *return* mail!

PLEASANT PROSPECT

A young fellow in Pittsburg intended to ask her father's consent the other evening, but changed his mind. He has decided to wait till the old gentleman is disabled from a fall on the ice, or till something equally propitious turns up. It happened in this way.

When he reached the house, the girl met him at the door, pearly tears stealing down her fair cheeks.

"Oh, George," she whispered, "I am so glad you have come. Please go into the library and see if you can calm father—he is so excited, and is raging about, knocking over the furniture and breaking things."

"Certainly," George said briskly. "What is the matter with the old gentleman?"

"I'm sure I don't know," she said. "He was all right, and I just began to tell him that you wanted to marry me."

Emmett C. Hall

Walnuts and Wine

JOHN CHINAMAN COMPLAINS

Chinamen and Laundrymen have a grievance, and a very genuine one. Although collars and cuffs, no matter to what laundry they may be given, are "done-up" wholesale at central depots, where they are helped back to a temporary life of respectability and usefulness, yet the percentage earned by each individual laundry mounts up to a considerable sum. It would seem that since the introduction of the much-advertised "Litholin" waterproofed linen collars and cuffs, which need no laundering, but are made clean and white as when new by wiping with a damp cloth, the laundry business in general has suffered considerable loss, and in some sections the weekly wash-lists show "Collars—blank, Cuffs—ditto." It is with this as with everything else. If people find that they can look neat, and save much time and money by wearing these "Litholin" collars and cuffs, which do not wilt, crack, nor fray, and keep their shape under all conditions, they are going to adopt them, and let the laundrymen look out for themselves.

A GOOD RESULT.

Under the operation of the new Pure Food Laws, baking-powders now generally bear on the labels a statement of the ingredients. This is of utmost importance because of the harmful ingredients used in many cases.

Royal Baking Powder is known to be the only baking-powder made of Royal Grape Cream of Tartar, and this no doubt explains its greatly increased sale here.

Careful housekeepers are taking advantage of the protection which the Laws afford, and are examining all the reading-matter on the back of the label before adopting any brand for use in the home.

When in place of the words Cream of Tartar the words "alum," "aluminum," or "phosphate of lime" appear among the ingredients, they heed the warning and avoid baking-powders containing these substitutes.



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THE LONE FISHERMAN

By E. F. Moberly

With bated breath, he played the line,
As the fish ran out from shore.
When it got off, he seized the jug
And baited his breath some more.

A SECRET

Little Mary was devotedly attached to a neighbor's cat and went every day to play with her. One day she returned home, her eyes big with excitement. "Why, mother," she exclaimed, "Pussy has kittens, and I did n't even know she was married."

Clara M. Taber

SPEAKER CANNON EXPLAINS

"Uncle Joe" Cannon and a friend were one day discussing the wild doings of a young Chicago man with whom both were well acquainted.

Mr. Cannon's friend was inclined to be very severe in criticism of the sower of wild oats; but "Uncle Joe" had more to say of his good than his bad qualities, remarking that at heart the boy was "all right." He thought it would be well to reserve judgment and give the lad a chance until he reached the age of discretion.

"At just what period would you place the attainment of discretion?" asked the friend quickly.

"Generally speaking," added "Uncle Joe," "I should say that a young fellow has reached the age of discretion when he removes from his walls the pictures of actresses and substitutes therefor a portrait of his wealthy bachelor uncle."

Edwin Tarrisse

A LOST ART

A Richmond housekeeper had occasion many times to employ a certain odd character of the town known as Aunt Cecilia Cromwell.

The old woman had not been seen in the vicinity of the house for a long time until recently, when the lady of the house said to her:

"Good morning, Aunt Cecilia. Why aren't you washing nowadays?"

"It's dis way, Miss Annie," replied Aunt Cecilia indulgently. "I's been out o' wuhk so long dat now, when I could wuhk, I finds I's done lost mah tas'e fo' it."

Taylor Edwards

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THE LISTENER

By E. De Lancey Pierson

Within the hammock's shining fold
My Lady lies in happy sleep;
A captive in a net of gold,
Where baby loves their vigil keep.

Her lips are parted in a smile,
As though she dreamed delightful things,
And on her hair is poised the while
A butterfly with jewelled wings.

What terrible temptation this!
Longing yet daring not to press
On those inviting lips a kiss.
They gleam with luring loveliness.

I lean to catch with listening ear
Some echo from the hall of dreams;
Is it my name that I shall hear
Soft murmured as the voice of streams?

A flash of pearls where roses glow!
She speaks! Oh, heart of mine be still!
"Kiss me just as you used to, Joe!"
Now, my name happens to be Bill!



A GENTLE HINT

"I got a neat rebuke for my curiosity once," said a well known Baltimore man, "and it was administered to me by a native of the Cheat River region in West Virginia.

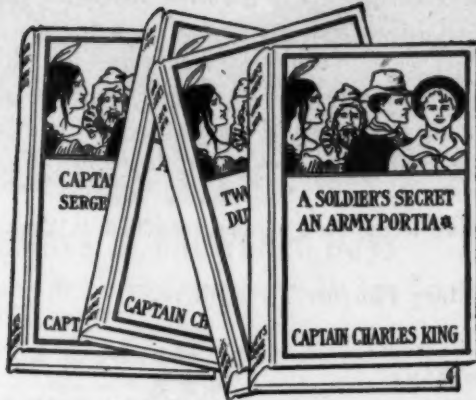
"I had stopped overnight in the district in question, and in the morning was strolling about the place, asking all sorts of questions. Presently I met a lanky mountaineer, who greeted me with 'Howdy' and passed the time of day most pleasantly. Seeing that he was barefooted, a circumstance, it seemed to me, quite odd in a mountainous region, I asked:

"Is it the custom of this country for the men to go without shoes?"

"Waal,' the native drawled, 'some on us do, but most on us atten's to our own business.'"

Fenimore Martin

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"THIS IS A BABY!"

The little family group was gathered round the font, and the clergyman, about to officiate, felt called upon for remarks.

"No one," he began, "can foretell the future of this little chap. Who knows but that he may grow up to be a great general like Grant himself. Or, it may be, a world-famous scientist like the immortal Newton. He may become a soul-saving divine or a wisdom-breathing judge."

Then, turning to the fond mother, he added, "What name is the child to bear?"

"Matilda Mary Florence," was the reply.

Warwick James Price

OVERHEARD IN ROME

American Girl: "Let's go to the Capitoline Museum and see the Wolf that nursed Romeo and Juliet."

F. W. Hiddings

ALL'S OVER

"Sure, Delia, where are you living now?"

"Faith, I'm not living at all. I'm married and a settled woman."

L. L. Montgomery

AT LEAST NOT PROFANE

By Ellis O. Jones

A decided brunette, by name Pickens,
Was arrested for stealing some chickens.

When they asked her to swear,

She replied, debonnaire:

"I only know 'deuce,' 'darn,' and 'dickens.'"

BROTHERLY LOVE

Tom gazed at his four-day-old sister with an expression of the keenest disappointment. The joys of brotherhood were not so full as he had anticipated. "Mother, may n't I go play with the boys?" he asked at length.

"I thought that you were going to stay with Sister always, and never leave her to play with the boys," she teased him.

"But, mother," he blurted out impatiently, "you know that if I stayed in all afternoon you would n't as much as let me touch her, and you can see for yourself she's not much to look at."

Clara M. Taber

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1907

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THOUGHT HE WOULD TRY HYPNOTIC SUGGESTION.—Continued.



THE COOK.—"Did yo' call, Missus?"

SUE.—"Yes; are you still dissatisfied with your place, Rosey?"

THE COOK.—"Da's what I am, an' I'se gwine to frow up de job. Dis yer waiten fo' de boss to come home an' gitten meals at all hours don't suit, an' I'se a gwine to quit, da's all de' is about it."

JACK.—"The article says, Fix your gaze steadily on the subject till you catch their eye, then—"

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SUE.—"Well, Mr. Smarty, your crazy idea didn't work, did it?"

JACK.—"You're the greatest pessimist I ever saw. No, it didn't work yet, because I couldn't catch her eye. I'll go down in the kitchen and try it again."

SUE.—"You'd better not, now mark my words."

THE CAT.—"I always enjoy these butting in seances. Mine for the kitchen."

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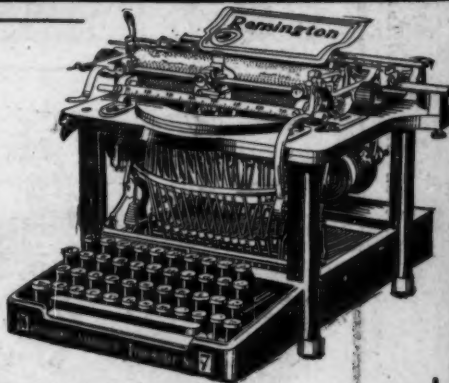
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 THE CAT.—"The cook thinks he's dippy."

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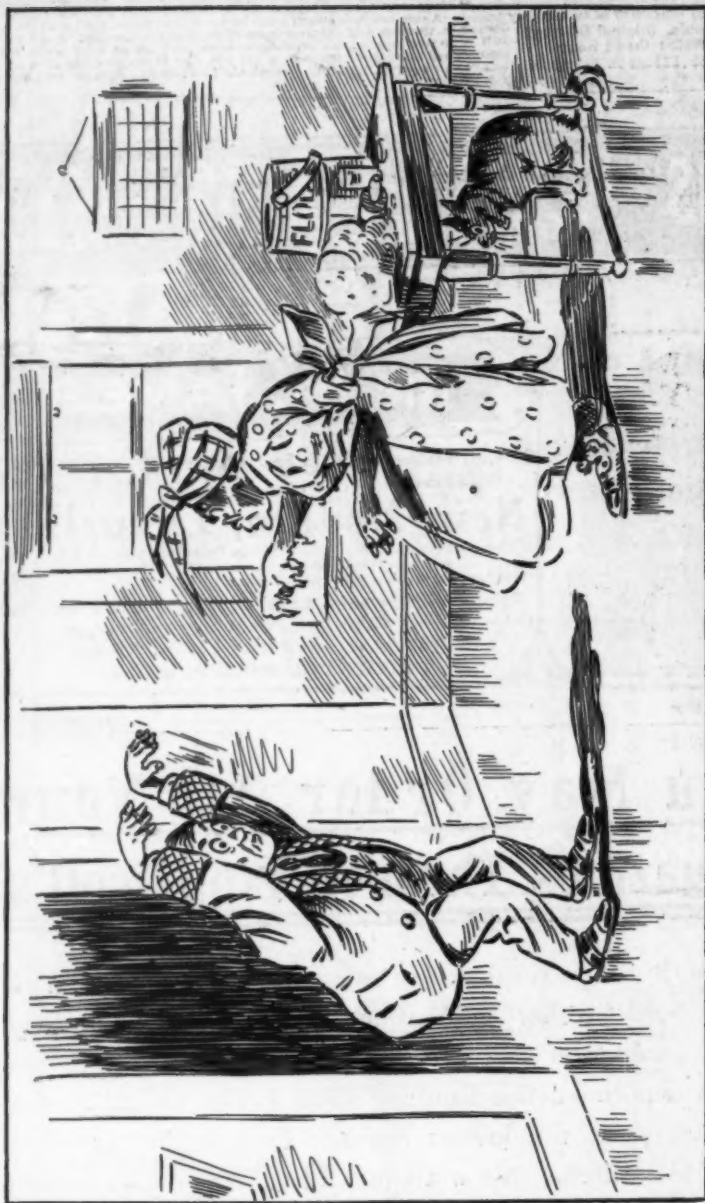
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SUE.—"I knew it!"

THE CAT.—"I allus' said the old man was a doughhead."



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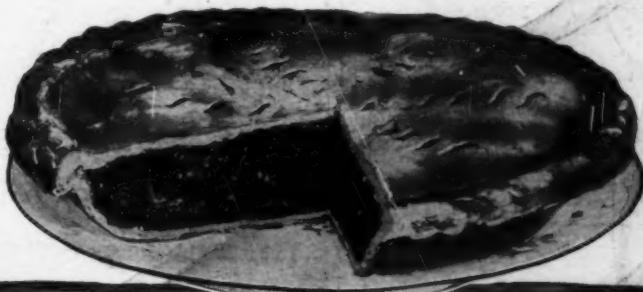
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